

THE QUEST OF COLUMBUS



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THE QUEST OF COLUMBUS

A MEMORIAL POEM

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TWELVE BOOKS

HENRY ILIOWIZI

1492 * * * 1892

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THE DESIGN AND THE VERSE.

The Quest of Columbus is intended to portray the almost superhuman endeavors of the world's greatest discoverer to realize his lofty goal, and his final triumph over wellnigh insurmountable difficulties.

Interwoven with this forever memorable Quest of 1492, the other two remarkable events of the same year, which concern the three great Creeds, are the siege and the fall of Granada, and the banishment of the Jews from Spain.

It is a well-known fact, that a stroke of the self-same pen which decreed the doom of Moorish dominion in Iberia, and the expulsion of the Hebrews therefrom, confirmed the titles of Christopher Columbus as the prospective Viceroy and Admiral of their Majesties of Castile and Aragon.

The verse of this work is pentameter, the heroic couplet being a feature in the first four Books. The other eight are elaborated in the Iambic quatrain, varied here and there by the *Ottava rima*, a stanza favored by many British and foreign authors, among them indorsed by Dryden as the noblest in the Anglo-Saxon idiom.

PHILADELPHIA, 12th October, 1892.

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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

BOOK L

ARGUMENT.

This opening Book translates the reader to Seville at a season of great rejoicing and festivity. The terrors of war are relieved by the celebration of the nuptials of Don Alonzo, heir-apparent to Portugal, and the oldest daughter of Spain's Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella. The leading prelates and grandees of the land are at Court. The festivities being over, the Sovereigns meet their Chivalry and Prelacy in solemn Council, urging the continuation of the war with Granada until the Moor's evil reign is overthrown. The appeal calls forth an enthusiastic response from the heads of the nobility. Forthwith Torquemada, the Great Inquisitor, addresses the Throne, insisting that it was the duty of their Catholic Majesties to anticipate their triumph over the crescent by vowing to banish the pernicious seed of Judah from Spain. He draws a dark picture of the Jews. Isabella deplores the blindness of her Hebrew subjects and the necessity of keeping up the fires of the Inquisition, closing with a gracious reference to the wisdom of Don Isaac Abarbanel, her minister of finance. Emboldened thus the distinguished Hebrew makes a plea for liberty of worship, and for human right in general, refuting the black accusation of his race by Torquemada. The moment of indecision that follows is utilized by Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Cardinal of Spain, to further the project of Columbus, who, unless answered favorably, would leave Spain for another land. The King thinks the time unauspicious for new enterprise. Columbus should wait until the war is over. The Council is closed with prayer offered up for the successful issue of the impending campaign.

Castile and Aragon wellnigh three score Of battles fought in unremitting war; The vassal princedoms heed the royal call The Moor to conquer, and his strongholds fall; In festal garb Spain's noble cities stand,
The sound of triumph rings throughout the land,
And robed in splendor shines the brilliant Court,
The feasts are varied by chivalrous sport;
Of late events the happiest Seville sees,
Hispania's knights, eclips'd by her grandees,
Their ponderous armor doff for silken state
The time's auspicious sign to celebrate;
Two nations, long engag'd in deadly war,
In cordial peace each other's ensigns bore,
For Spain's Infanta to Lusitania's Heir
Before Love's altar did her vow declare,
And blessings shower'd on the princely pair.

And, after weeks in sumptuous feasts are spent, In dancing hall, parade and tournament, A knightly mock-war laureate warriors wage, The scenes resembling the Saturnian Age, The Queen the King himself in tourney sees Who lances tries with twelve of his grandees,— The priest and noble hear the Monarch's call And stand array'd in the palatial hall, Where King and Queen, enthroned on their seat, Their chivalry with royal pleasure meet, Great chiefs of arms and large dominion they, From Murcia to Leon, from Xeres to the Bay, All bound in honor, ready with the sword In thick of battle to redeem the word; To right and left grave prelates crowd the floor, Among them sits the Great Inquisitor.

King Ferdinand, as Jupiter in state, Reclines serenely toward his queenly mate, As Venus lovely she, a Queen in grace, Her eyes illumine a determin'd face; A whisper passeth from the King to her, She nods in answer, prompt his will to share; For she is Queen with full a sovereign's will. The King is Aragon, the Queen Castile. Unlike her lord who Moor and Jew doth burn To prop the Church in hope of base return, She yields reluctant, but the priests compel Her nobler soul to sanction deeds of hell,— Those Moloch fires, martyrs in the flame, Her edict kindled, Spain's undving shame! The Ruler speaks, the Court is mute with awe, They deem his will irrevocable law; His will is hers whom deeply they revere; Thus never oracle found readier ear Than he whose words chivalrous vassals hear.

"Señores, princes, tried compeers, of late Unconquerable sons of sires great, Nor glowing speech is ours nor the desire To rake up fuel for the raging fire Which spreads destruction, like a hungry flame In our great combat of unblighted fame. Our filial honor forced on us this war When from Hispania Zahara the Moor, Our tributary, unencounter'd tore, To us endeared, as ever to a son

À sacred heirloom glorious fathers won.
Ye know Señores, Disharmony in Spain,
Our foe sustaining, made resistance vain,
Thus much of evil on our land was brought,
Too long the Laras and the Castras fought,
The blood of Spaniard was by Spaniard shed;
Too long the Christian was the Christian's dread,
Else never Moslem could have held a day
These fairest regions under foreign sway.

"The Arab came, Confusion seized the land, The Arab stayed upheld by Gothic hand, The Goth, forgetful of inglorious loss, The crescent help'd to trample down the cross. He knew of Walia not, who struck at Rome, Nor knew the Cid, a rock in Christendom. Was he in trance, who once 'gainst Cæsar stood, To revel in preposterous brothers' feud? Or did the fabled fury warp his brain To mar the annals of distracted Spain, Once great and mighty, one from main to main? The nightmare passed, our star ascended high, Who dares our host, our chivalry defy, Whose triumphs pale the glories of Platææ, Nor yield to Zama, Cannæ, Thermopylæ. Our heroes live; Troy fought no braver men Than you, Señores, who smote in the den The lupine cohorts of the Saracen; Betwixt Alhama's fall and Malaga's doom We wrought the tale of world-famed Ilium.

"But, as the brute, beleaguered in its lair, The foe encounters with renewed despair, Steals forth in dark to work its evil plan And carries carnage to the haunts of man, So impotent the Moslem in his rage Resolved a war of shame and theft to wage. Granada's battlements an army hold, Her Vega waves with crops of ripening gold; In dead of night those carnal swarms descend To lay on church and home unholy hand, To stab and slaughter, outrage maid and dame, To but and convent set the arson flame, And, like a cyclone, sweep all in their way; Unbound by Honor, Age and Youth they slay. No peace with them, enough the plague we bore, Unroll the banner, let the cannon roar; Strike at Granada and Alhambra's wall. Relentless warring till the crescent fall; Till freed the Christians rotting in foul dens Unpitied, loath'd of loathful Saracens.— And we, the Rulers, solemnly did both In God's Omniscience take the sacred oath To dress in armor, sleep in shirts of steel, Cut off that city, and with our foeman deal As Greece hath dealt with old ill-fated Troy. Our foe we conquer, conquer or destroy. With us our Queen the valiant host will lead And queenly honor each heroic deed, Set on the bravest head the hero's crown, In peace our star, in war our Amazon,"

Thus Ferdinand; the great assembly cheers The martial King who to his knights appears As great and fearful as the god of war; The air is trembling with the bombard's roar; They are enkindled, eager for the fray, To strive they burn, impatient of delay. Now, as a sullen cloud the sunny plain Invests with gloom and pales the golden grain, Or, as in Bengal's wilds the tiger's trace Scares mirth and laughter from the rover's face, So nameless fear in doubt the audience wraps, As one dark figure slowly forward steps, Like that dread message written on the wall By Fate's own hand before Belshazzar's fall.— Who was that monk who, like Medusa's eye, The gaze possess'd man's heart to petrify? Hell's prince could scarce a deeper fear inspire Than Torquemada, breathing hateful ire; As Aztec priest, he from the bosom tore A myriad hearts to glut his thirst for gore. Free speech he craves: the Monarchs grant it soon, And, like his office, cruel is the boon He asking backs with monkish lore and wit, Appeals to Passion, ransacks Holy Writ.

"This glorious moment, O my Queen and King! The highest angels hallelujah sing, While him unnumber'd scraphim adore, God's only Son, our gracious Saviour, In radiance clad, yet not devoid of pain;

Alas! our sins unseal his wounds again, The heavens darken, cherubic squadrons sigh, An uproar spreads a tumult in the sky; And sinful we, who unconcerned see Beneath the cross rank Infidelity Thus rampant gangrene, like a poisonous weed, The emblems mocking of the Christian's creed, As though prevention unapplied implies Not sheer defiance hurled to the skies.— In Catholic Hispania we deem well To let Judea's roaming myriads dwell, Who, though unsummon'd to the tented field. Untried by loss, uncarned power wield. And treasures hoard which dazzle and allure Proud Gothic knights to mate with tribes impure. Gold, gems and wealth, the Hebrew's fond display. Oy'r souls uncleansed hold resistless sway, Who fain for lucre heart and body sell And follow Mammon to the jaws of Hell, Unsaved by us, who pray for grace and bliss, And weaklings fling into the flames of Dis.

"The Jew a Spaniard! Taric was his friend,
The Bedouin hordes he welcomed in this land;
King Roderick's rout near Xeres he did see,
Like Pharaoh's fall, with undisguised glee;
Toledo's gate he open'd to the foe,
Spain's weal he shares, he never shared her woe!
When to the Christ we offer him to lift
Ungrateful he the giver scorns and gift,

A deaf ear turning to the preacher's word, In caustic strains deriding our blest Lord. Convert the Jew we tried, we try in vain, One saint Inquisitor by him was slain; The Holy Office and the smoking pyre, The dungeon's horrors, thumb-screw, rack and fire, And hideous Hell, which ever vawning waits For heretics, the stiff-neck'd Semite hates Searce more than him, who on Golgotha wore The thorny crown, while fiendish hell-hounds tore His quivering limbs with reeking spikes of steel, When Chaos shook, the Universe did reel, The sun, affrighted, shed a lurid ray On that sky-hated and earth-quaking day.— What the our arms the Mussulman subdue, Fall he or not, unvanquish'd is the Jew, Of pompous homes voluptuous grandee, In show and might a prince from sea to sea, His house a slough, a dragon's nest of evil, Each head a caitiff of the tempting devil.

"Ungodly mercy was the sin of Saul Who, sparing Agag, caused his power's fall; No mortal dare just Heaven's doom reverse Since, lighting on the wicked, weighs the curse Of guilt inherited from ages past To last as long as this frail race shall last. Christ's adversary harbor and implore Santiago's help, the Virgin we adore, The guardian angels, who with us invade

The infidel, and lead in this crusade,
Befits ambiguous souls, not such as thirst
To be among the Saviour's host the first,
Hold forth Salvation for the fallen race,
Themselves intrench'd in the domain of Grace.

"Thus, ere Your Majesties embattled move To vanquish Granada, my plan approve, And yours, great princes, shall that city be, Yours perfect faith, untarnish'd victory. Rome's Pontiff pleads with me, for Christ we plead, May Spain, like Rome, be Catholic indeed, Like Rome upsoar beneath the Highest Throne Where Father, Son and Ghost unite in One.— None save the baptized shall enjoy this land By Christian prowess wrung from faithless hand. The Sacred Book tells, how by Will Divine The Hebrew, striving for ancient Palestine, While wrecking kingdoms, slew horde after horde, The heathen brood gave to the naked sword; Unlike our Church, they ask'd none to embrace The threefold Covenant of the chosen race: We tender love to them who dare deride And scorn the image of the Crucified, Prefer perdition to his tree of life, Who fed five thousand with the food of five: Who godlike trod the placid tremulous wave, Uprose transfigured from the putrid grave.— His foes confounding, deign, great Monarchs, now To close this Council with a holy yow:

Granada lying prostrate at your feet,
Never in prayer there our Saviour meet,
Before at royal bidding it be read,
That sons of Judah, living, sick, or dead,
Nor Mercy find above nor peace below,
Be banish'd hence before the evil grow,
Before the Church of God they overthrow.
Thus will ye, Monarchs, Saint Recared's will
And Pope Gregory's fondest wish fulfill,
Who Hebrews banish'd, fill'd with righteous fears
Of Jewish treason, now nine hundred years."

As oft a wakful eve the sleeper sees Endure the nightmare's fearful agonies, And, when relieved, a heaving breast betrays The dreamer's ease upon his placid face; Or as sometimes on a bleak April day A broken cloud allows a golden ray To hold out promise of a sunnier May, When Spring's advent clears off the Winter's gloom, And stiffened features softer airs assume; So was the silence grateful to the sense, Although it was the silence of suspense; Mute Expectation rose and grew intense, The last word slowly dying in the hall, As thunder's echo or the Ocean's roll When on a distant ear they grumbling fall. Fierce Torquemada, trustful of the King, Is confident his words will ruin bring On that immovable race, who durst defy

The Holy Office and the priestly spy,
Prepared as Jews to worship or to die.
The noblemen, as if in face of Death,
The Sovereign's pleasure wait with baited breath,
But, unprepared the King his mind to tell,
Hear thus discourse his pious Isabel.

"Thy admonition, father, and advice. Spring from a heart so pure, a head so wise That we, who undivided would behold The Church of Christ our State and Throne enfold, Shall in due season thy design give thought,— The or not before this closing war is fought,-Beseeching Him, who guards us night and day, That we unerring choose the wisest way; For, meaning well, frail beings often err If ill-advised they great resolves declare, And, bent on good, have evil to deplore, Since evil once is evil evermore. Fain by that faith the Lamb of God hath given Would we Judea's remnant lead to Heaven; To bear his message this wide world around King, queen and vassal are in duty bound; Fain should we quench those fetid smokes, which rise And shroud in darkness Andalusia's skies, Whose fragrant breezes, grateful to the sense. Are sated thus with seed of pestilence. While daily spreading over us a gloom Portentous hovers, like a cloud of doom.— Of man unworthy is the cruel sight

To see the helpless brute transfix'd in flight Unmoved; much less unpitied in the flame To see men perish with the brand of shame In agonies untold, devoid of faith, Life, name and hope lost in a dreadful death. Long in our conscience brooding, fearing less Our holy rigors cause undue distress To tender innocents, who know not why They must endure such woeful misery, Their parents lose in an infernal tomb, Forfeiting all, their heritage, their home, We wrote our scruples to the Holy See; And Rome sent answer, that idolatry The ruins made on which God's Kingdom rose; We should salvation on the world impose; And it were right, that infidels by loss Be humbled low to kneel before the cross. Since, punishing our parents, the All-Wise Had banish'd them from happy Paradise, Their offsprings bearing full the woes they bore, By Heaven judged, He first Inquisitor.

"What folly, seeing thus the ebbing tide Of Heathendom with dying roar subside Before the thunders of invincible foes, Whose vast dominion ever vaster grows, Unearthly favored, battling great and free, Marshall'd by saints in sparkling panoply, As when Jerusalem by fiery blades Of angels fell, who lead in those crusades, To answer Mercy with Defiance hurl'd Against the mightest of this mighty world. How passing strange to see a people err Jehovah chose His priest and messenger, Preservers of the seed ordained to be In aftertimes the saving Eden-tree: Far-seeing men who new events discern, From nascent things impending issues learn; Men skill'd in arts which grace the noblest mind, In hoarding treasure leaving skill behind, Invaluable in management of things, To princes welcome, welcome to great kings, They unenlighten'd by the world's event— The blest Messiah with Salvation sent! Except this error, judging by the past, We may no odium on the Hebrew cast;— Thus for eight years the treasures of our land No ebb did suffer in a Hebrew's hand.— Ye know him all, Señores, know him well, Our trusty minister Abarbanel."

The silver note still linger'd in the ear When, as if prone to read Don Isaac's fear, The whole Assembly turned full their gaze On him they honor'd of the censured race. There stood in pain the servitor of State, A passive hearer of the sad debate The arch-foe of his kin did initiate. Him Torquemada hated little less Than all the rest, who did his faith profess,

And nicknamed him "The devil's cunning cheat Who, fiend himself, the devil may defeat." But none his honor coupled with a doubt, Knowing his mind was generous and devout; Even Gonzalez, deadly foe of him, Could by no stain that Hebrew's lustre dim. He of Davidic line and princely blood, Eight years replenishing the ebbing flood Of royal treasure wasted in the war, Conversant was with old and modern lore, A student deep of what the ages taught, For wisdom digging, led by highest thought. The Queen, he hoped, would lend a gracious ear If, daring for his race to interfere, A suppliant he would approach the Throne Before the evil came and Hope was gone; Great moment when a people's fate depends On one who, pleading, unassisted stands. A throbbing heart his body shakes and knee; He forward comes, in bearing a grandee, To plead for Justice or appeal to Grace; The gloom of sorrow saddens eye and face, Not unrelieved by a luminous streak, A shade of light that vanishes too quick.— The queenly eye beams mercy undenied, The King doth half her sympathy divide, As downcast they behold the hoary sage Encounter mildly Torquemada's rage; Her gracious nod his drooping spirits brace, Who, lowly bowing, thus appeals for grace.

"If I, dread Sovereigns, basking in the ray Of sky-blest Royalty had naught to say For loyal kinsmen humbled and careworn, Whom Time reserves for undeserved scorn, Who suffer torments, suffer for the Great Infinite Spirit, and more precious rate The love of worship at the Highest Throne Than pomp and power, bubbles basely won; If I, to Nature false, would make no plea For friendless friends, for Faith and Loyalty, The meanest I should deem myself of them, Who crave and wear sweet Sorrow's diadem. Man worships greatness even in his foes, By worship lifted genius godlike grows; Mere whim divides what Nature means to be Throughout her realms harmonicus unity. Mankind is one, one like that Fountain-Head Whence life is flowing, whither go the dead, One Spirit moves the All, it flows in beams Of truth eternal from celestial streams: Whose seeks Truth and clings to her with love In him is Virtue, Spirit from above; If man but worship, needless to agree Or force Conviction; man like God is free: Free as the bird who free his carol sings In various cadence Heaven's Goodness rings; Free as the cloudlet, free as Azure's vast, As ether free, free as the lightning's blast; As must our breath so must our soul be free, The mind enchained makes life a slavery.—

In countless ways Almighty works His end, The bud and blossom toward mild sunshine bend, Free homage paying to that radiant sphere; He worships not who worships out of fear. The free-born reverence God, why rules enforce On mind sky-prompted, as the water's course.

"Tho' from great Ocean all the currents spring, That flood the earth and golden harvests bring, On Azure throw that wondrous rainbow-span Of many hues, which is the awe of man, Not all, ascending the cloud-vested height, Descend to mirror constellations bright In streams of crystal, lakes of skyey blue, In limpid rivers, pearls of sparkling dew; But some break passage, thro' impassable tracts, Some sweep adown in roaring cataracts; Thro' rock and crevice others come to light, Some well in tunnels, some in rayless night; Some spread destruction in the fertile plain, Some clear return, some troubled to the main; And like those currents doth the human wave Around this globe unnamed spectres brave, Mysterious Destiny with pall and grave, Instinct with faith, that spirits pure must rise, As things ethereal, to the rainbow'd skies.— With reason dawning, feelings undefined, Man long of Edens and of hells divined, With ardor turned to the orb of day, The river, brute adored, or gods of clay,

Believed his idol truest of the rest, His worship truest, and his rite the best. A freezing horror seizes heart and mind On gazing thro' the darkest times behind, To see the recking fumes from altars rise Where man of man makes hideous sacrifice, His kin, his child delivers to the flames, His lewdness gratifies, his body mains, Convinced his fetich of immortal bliss Delights in foulness, sacrifice like this.— Yea, old is Error, old the search of Truth, As old as longing for unfading Youth And power here; unblamable the greed To gain dominion, spread a cherish'd creed, In the hereafter seek a heavenly goal; As God is living, deathless is our soul. To live forever strove immortal Cid, Immortal longing built the pyramid; Oil, bronze and marble quicken to the breath Of Art in contest with the rule of Death; Ay, plant and brute, each species, it is clear, Obeying Nature, sturdy offsprings rear Their kind on earth forever to preserve; Then, Manhood why impeach that hates to swerve From sacred lines a hundred ages trace? Can filial Reverence be a son's disgrace? Lou's prophet joins Iran's blessed guide, The Orient's wisest, India's deathless pride; The dreamer of Nirvana, and the mage Of Egypt's wisdom, how far from the sage

Of Greece and Rome and Bethlehem are they That speak of powers who this planet sway, Alternate ruling as frail mortals prove Or cacodemons or high-priests of Love.

"The faith of Love, what else revealed he, The Christian's Master, what our Prophecy? His lore at hand, his symbols within ken, Who dream'd of peace and good will to all men. Without a line of Scripture old or new, Without a cause, an accusation true, With tears of angels, who our woes record, Iberia burns the image of the Lord! A myriad martyrs perish'd at the stake, Who would impious not with fathers break, From Sinai bearing in Jehovah's name The grandest Message mankind to reclaim! Sweet Charity may Justice help to stay The cruel rod that hurts, too weak to slay A people's honor tested by the tears And death-defiance of three thousand years,— Iberia's guilty sons have done the most In drawing hither the invading host When Roderick's fall Hispania overthrew: Count Julian's vengeance Taric's army drew, And traitor Oppas, priest and bishop, too, Their Gothic legions joined, veterans all, To help the Arab speed Don Roderick's fall. Some Jews betrayed, forsooth they did betray Tormentors ready hate for love to pay;

They should have borne an unendurable fate; Ah, they were men, who gave no love for hate.

"Ay, sorrow is my people's tragic tale, Since Zion's downfall buffeting the gale Of grim Adversity, Oppression fierce, In cradle scorned, scorned on the hearse. When lived a nation, vainly doth one search The olden chronicles of State or Church. Who God's great altar under heaven built, A thousand times for Faith the heart's blood spilt, As Israel by Inspiration swayed, By anguish tried, by trials undismayed? No home, no rest, since Zion widow'd stands, No rest for them who praying fold their hands, Who bless the soil wherever they sojourn, Until once more, like saplings newly born, From climes endeared, from sacred homesteads torn, They wander forth, the mother suffering most, The babe in arm, a haggard, starving host!— Forbear, great Monarchs, Justice cries forbear Such fearful judgment 'gainst us to declare, Who work devoted to this Commonweal With Hebrew ardor and the Spaniard's zeal. How shall I tell the sorrow of a race Whose mothers weep, whose infants pray for grace? White-headed Age with tears for Justice cries, For Mercy all waft prayers to the skies, Knowing Almighty Innocence befriends, And sovereigns, likewise, whom to rule He sends."

As when the springing day in beauty spread A frowning West illumines dark and dread, The sky around, as if in mute suspense, Looks neutral blue betwixt the masses dense Of gold-edg'd zones indefinite in form And lurid clouds of the impending storm, So shone the Queen, Compassion in her look, While red with anger Torquemada shook, Unable a grim temper to subdue, Seeing the Queen felt pity for the Jew; A knowing infidel, who by old lore Gainsaid the charge of the Inquisitor, Inserting subtly the envenomed sting How Roderick's ruin priesteraft help'd to bring, When Goth and Moor Don Roderick dealt the blow Which did Hispania's power overthrow. You iron magnates, who, inured to deed Of gory battle, could see kinsmen bleed Unmoved, but having child and parent gray, Stood stirr'd within, the none had aught to say, Aware the King ungracious took the plea, Unsettled yet, but void of sympathy.— Poor minions, poor in soul, when will ye learn Mock-chivalry from Manhood to discern? God's living ray, enkindled to a flame, Man's bosom moves to love; unspeakable shame! To see it buried smoulder in a rage In strife intestine with base vassalage, The fetters loathing, golden tho' they be, Of crowned baseness, titled slavery.

How many dare the bolder thought give word? How many would the word and deed accord? Deceit prevails, the guileful will beguile, The cheat deceive, the traitor stab and smile, Thus putting Treason's currency in vogue, Each other rating either fool or rogue. Why should not man, else high above the beast, In simple candor equal it at least? Or is he less than basest creature free With all his like agree or disagree, Promote the good, the bad hate as he can, Be true to self, be honest, be a man? Have faith in self, thy being's bent confess, Be Epicurus or Diogenes, Be Machiavelli rather than be weak; In thought a hero, dare the truth to speak; Thy hand and foot have chained, if this must be, Thy spirit flow, as light and ether free.

Now yonder stately prelate, who is he
Of lordly port, majestic dignity?
His thoughtful look bespeaks self-conscious weight;
Spain's first in Church, third power in the State
They number him at Court, and justly so,
The Sovereigns honoring his Yea, or No.
The Queen's adviser, Cardinal of Spain,
Great wealth was his, beside a large domain
Of land and men; nor would he shun a chance
Of chivalrous exploit with sword or lance,
Tho' on his head the locks did plainly show

Of three score years the shining silver snow.—
Gonzalez de Mendoza doubly bound
Feels at this hour to let his voice resound
In deprecating manner, urging strong
Postponement of an act he deems not wrong
But thinks unwise, knowing how much was due
Of past achievement to the thrifty Jew,
Who during war gave gold with open hand,
In peace did stir the staples of the land;
Of late again his contribution sent,
His fanes divesting of all ornament.

Besides, the Cardinal stood bound to find The present temper of the royal mind About that strange exploit, the jest and theme Of Court and country, banter'd as a dream Of airy tissues wrought; a brain disease, Affecting deep a venturous Genoese. He, like a prophet, fire in his eyes Of regions raved as fair as Paradise, Or, like a bard inspired by his lay, Columbus would the hearer's fancy sway By tales of kingdoms he would give to Spain, If sail he could athwart the gulfy main. A fleet he sought to plough the Western sea, Unseal the lips of Myth and Mystery, Discover countries vast and wonderful, And hoist the ensign of Iberia's rule,— With twofold purpose thus the Priest of Spain The Throne addressed in an earnest strain.

"Your Majesties amid the din of war Discussion hear on themes of pious lore, And ask, perchance, if this Assembly be A learned conclave at the Papal See, Or warlike leaders of our chivalry, Renowned warriors summon'd to invade The Moor's last refuge, who in this crusade, Defeated often, often rose again, Resistance bidding our victorious Spain.

"Ill-time for him, whom focs to action rouse, To stir Commotion in his peaceful house Where, lord unquestioned, in the hour of peace, If men he rule, may please them or displease, The caged bird may feed or slay, or peg, May slay the goose that lays the golden egg: No hurry there, but elsewhere, should we wait, Too slow to profit by a hint of Fate So precious rare, we might discover late An Eldorado slipping thro' our hand To flood with treasure some unholy land. And loss by golden harvests unretrieved Are hopeless races who no Christ received; With sin in soul, uncleansed, faithless they, Unknowing, thirst not for the sky-sent ray Which from the Orient breaking, like a wave Of beatific radiance, man did save From evil here and Hell beyond the grave. What pity, Sire, if hopeless nations live Beyond the Ocean, who no grace receive!

What sorry thought, my Queen, thro' them who fell, That millions unredeemed sink into Hell! Might not kind Heaven, sinful tho' we be His pleasure utter thro' that prophecy Columbus blazons, as of yore in trance, The wizard poured prophetic utterance?

"In vain did Wisdom her grave scruples tell, In vain did Malice hoot and Mockery yell, His visions glow, he speaks, as if his eyes Had seen the grandeurs of those distant skies, And in his transport makes the doubter see The vivid pictures of his phantasy, Who, never tired, never stops to say Of Mangi's hoards, the wonders of Cathay, The Khan's conversion, who once petition sent To Rome for faith, baptism and sacrament.

"Whether an armament with flags unfurl'd Shall sail in quest of the unscarched world, Return triumphant, startling things in store, Or come unenvied, or return no more, Columbus, long by patient waiting tried, Now prays, Your Majesties may deign decide; For not uncourted now, as hitherto, Doth he unpatronized a patron woo. Three monarchs promise, should be leave this land, To place armadas at his sole command, He being courted by the urgent call Of Portugal, great Albion and Gaul."

"Grand Cardinal," the wary King replies, "We ever honor'd, honor your advice, Who, wise in counsel, in religion great, A luminous pillar gracing Church and State, Doth reason wisely, we believe and feel, With love inspired for Hispania's weal, And for the cause our Saviour did bequeath To us for whom he gave himself to Death. But even kings are weaker than their will, Tho' crown'd and sceptred they have wishes still Oft unfulfill'd, oft tantalized by Fate, Yea, frail are monarchs, God alone is great!--New enterprise at this portentous hour When bristling swarms along our borders lour, Against our cities bend their vengeful arms, On hill and mountain feed their fire alarms, Our outposts threaten, siege lay to our forts, Would, like the wooer who two maidens courts, Uncertain of securing one with ease, Our strength diminish and our risks increase. The war once ended, it is our intent That mariner the armed ships to grant Well fitted to resist the stormy wave, Untraversed waters, perils dark to brave, That he discover some new land and race Of men unsaved, who no Creator praise, Know not our Lord foreign to light and grace. -Let this Columbus know: peace unrestored, Indulge in hazards we can ill afford. Scarce time have we at this momentous turn,

While host and chivalry with ardor burn
To end the combat of so many years,
By triumphs brightened, sadden'd oft by tears
Of widow'd mothers, orphans on the breast,
To give ripe thought to ventures in the West;
Nor have we surplus to defray the cost
Of an armada likely to be lost.
War drains the marrow, drains the wealth of Spain;
War, then, until our land be free again;
War be our calling, war our thought and dream,
War on the crescent, Christ shall rule supreme!"

The Council closes; humble on the knee
The King and Queen, the prelate, the grandee,
With earnest soul their saints and gods implore
To bless their arms in this protracted war.
With folded hands thus Torquemada prays:
"Sweep Moor and Jew, Lord, from Hispania's face
Who scorn Thy Son, reject His precious grace,
When Spain, the worldly, Rome the ghostly might,
Shall rule sole arbiters of Faith and Right!"
One prays erect, while from his eye doth well
The tear of grief; he is Abarbanel.

Credulity, thy dupes are thick as sand, As rank as summer weeds in every land; In every clime, dull goddess, Reason flies Before the blindness of thy votaries, Who would chaotic Night on earth restore, Had God not Chaos doomed forevermore.

BOOK II.

ARGUMENT.

The magnitude of the discoverer's enterprise; superior to an achievements past. The perseverance of Columbus; on his way to France with his child, Diego; seeks rest in a shady grove; serious meditation; at the gate of La Rabida. He unfolds himself to the Prior. His grievance against the Spanish Court, and his determination to proceed to France. The Prior detains and entertains him. They ascend at sunset the highest belfry of the Convent that commands a view on the sea. The Prior's apprehensions concerning the Quest. Certain legends. In answer Columbus unrolls a gorgeous picture of the unredeemed East, especially of Xipangu and Cathay, adding reasons in support of his assertion. Serious thoughts. The Council of Salamanca is re ferred to. The grandeur of prophecy. Comfort derived from ideal dreams. This earth yet to be fully saved. His first vision of the undiscovered world. How it was revealed to him, and by whom. His bitter disappointment at Cordova. Fernando de Talavera the cause. A mystic vision of a dead world buried in darkness; its restoration to light and life. What visions mean. Faith his inexhaustible comfort; longs to be the leader of another crusade against the Caliph. moment followed by a fright. The Prior is inspired by the enthusiasm of his guest, and promises to take steps to influence the Queen to whom he is known.

Thou Wisdom Highest, blazing from above In glowing symbols, Thou, Supremest Love, Who of Thy prime Effulgence send'st a beam, A blessed ray of that sky-flooding stream, That feeds the stars, to light the mortal's mind With sacred Truth, the quest of human kind,

Deign Thou whom sage and bard and prophet seek To brace and strengthen what in me is weak, Should daring I from trodden pathways stray, While of the world's discoverer I say: How he, inspired with a martyr's zeal, This globe's unknown half did to man reveal, More fabulous than those weird lands of yore, Old Chin, Great Tartary, than India's shore To Ethiopia's bounds; thence round the Inland Sea That Asia layes, Europe and Barbary. Yet law it seems, Almighty wills it so, That earthly Joy be conscious of some woe, That triumphs won in this sublunar life, Be won in struggle, won in deadly strife. Thus gone are they, who friendly did embrace The wile intruders of a greedy race, Them deeming beings of unearthly birth, Bestowing blessings on the sons of earth; Forever gone, gone, betrayed and slain, By bloodhounds torn, those curs of cruel Spain!

But how by rank unaided, strange at Court,
The wiseling's scorn, of every wit the sport,
Did undishearten'd thus Columbus face
The sphinx of riddles, plough the shoreless space,
Unknown, unsounded, gulfs prodigious deep,
Which monsters haunt, disastrous tempests sweep?
How pictured he his vision to the ear
Which, realized, restored a hemisphere,
From sea to sea a garden made for man,

The exile's home, his golden Canaan? Call them no heroes, be their fame unsung Who, wielding armies, happy kingdoms wrung From hands unclasped, too weak to resist The tyrant's weapon planted in the fist; No glory gild them who for empire fight, They strive not thus unrighted wrong to right; Their deeds, if living, written are in flame, Of groans and curses woven is their fame. But those remember, grateful sound their praise, Whose lofty dealings lifted all the race, Who, as Columbus, forlorn, poor, alone. Accomplish'd more than Spain's exalted throne; Than Casar more and than the Pontiffs all, More than the Great of Muscovy and Gaul, Than all the victors famed resistless strong, The Thors and Titans fabled of in song.-Hear him discourse, upsoaring in his goal, A wounded heart is his, a yezed soul, Of greatness dreaming, that shall gild his name With dazzling lustre, everlasting fame.

"You where the twigs and leafage intertwine And let the sunlight tremulously shine On herbage cool, my son, a while we bide, Until reposed, of perspiration dried, We toward that Convent move upon the hill Where holy friars holy vows fulfill, Live but to pray from early morn to eye, The weary pilgrim of his cares relieve,

Relieve of sin the penitent who come
Shipwrecked, sore, to seek a peaceful home.—
Dear, sweet Seclusion, Peace Elysian sweet,
Thrice blest to such as, hunting Fortune, meet
Her slavish minions eying with disdain
Unhonor'd Honor, too conscious to complain;
Thou isle of comfort 'mid an ocean's rage,
Life's oasis, whose balms all sores assuage,
Not I thy portal seek therein to stay;
Long drifted helpless on my lonely way,
Whose years are wasted, wasted in delay."

Thus, ere they enter the leaf-woven shade,
Columbus speaks; then passing thro' a glade,
They breathe the cool beneath a roof of trees;
The father takes the urchin on his knees,
Who slips the hold, makes pillow of his palm,
And sleep is there his nascent cares to calm.
But thou, Columbus, unrelieved by sleep
Of pains, which like a seething torrent sweep
Thro' heart and brain and make thy forehead hot,
Tho' undespairing, thine is gloomy thought;
Thy prospects faded, Spain thy hopes deceived,
Wherefore thou speakest thus in soul aggrieved.

"Why dwells my thought on the void shows of life,
The dream of youth, the husband and the wife,
The fear of death, the mystery of birth;
Meseems as heaven mysterious is the earth,
A world of folly, creatures struggling round

Unthoughtful, treading consecrated ground, As if unconscious of a wither'd past Or unalarmed at the end of dust.— So must it be, else mother's kiss and tear Would burning fall upon her infant dear; The youth, his love embracing, could but rave, Seeing in mind his dearest in the grave; Endeavor slacken'd, cease would work and strife; Who could incessant face grim Death in Life? Eternal Grace those horrid sights forbade To haunt the mind and robe the world in shade,— Yet thoughtless being, toiling without aim, Live like the worm, decay unknown to Fame. Swim with the current, sail on with the breeze, Man's birthright sacrifice to slavish ease; Pursue the road twelve hundred millions tread, Then rot among the unremember'd dead, Instead of treading empires untrod, Be famed for aye an instrument of God, Ill suits a soul who, like myself, is driven To great achievement by the Voice of Heaven.— The Godhead speaks, tho' oracles are gone, To every soul, not to the seer alone; The Godhead speaks, He speaks vet to the best The upright heart, I feel it in my breast; I feel the fiat rolling thro' my blood The Spirit, brooding on the rayless flood, Sent forth thro' Chaos, ere creation rose; I feel the Spirit, who the prophet chose Unutter'd truth inspired to reveal;

His message in my heart of hearts I feel, Impell'd by Fate that secret to unseal, Which half this planet, since the world was made, In darkness hides, impenetrable shade. I inly glow, Promethean is the flame, Which quenchless burns in this devoted frame; Undamped fires parching nerve and brain, Make Hope's delay the pain of mortal pain.

" Ay me! what throes each precious birth precede, What flowers are smother'd by the rampant weed! How speedy Error man of Truth to rob, How crawling Truth to undeceive the mob, Who, as dull monks, instinctively agree To pester Genius with Theology! The frozen dogma, as the mummy dead, Like dragon's teeth, infernal goblins bred. The living God weaves on His loom of Time His living garb in every age and clime; The starry heavens proclaim His glowing Love All flesh and spirit toward Perfection move; The past is past, new times new problems raise, New lights are dawning, breaking thro' the haze Of mists unlifted by men who extol Unfruitful dogmas over Truth and soul,"

From rest upstarting, brushing off the flies, Impatient Diego rubs his drowsy eyes, Then at his father looks with mute appeal, Since early morn the boy hath had no meal. "Come, Diego, son, the wasp is not as bad As parching Thirst or Hunger's mouth unfed; Come on, my boy," the loving parent smil'd And gently fondled his uncheerful child. "You hospitable fold hath bread for all And blessings, too, for such as humbly call."

Uphill they climb, a solitary height
Rabida's Convent shows in sunny light,
A cloister famous among the rustic mass,
Who yearly thither flock in festive dress,
The Virgin worship, who the rabies' rage
Since years bath banish'd from that vicinage.
Unsought, unguarded, silent all alone
There rose the precinct of moss-cover'd stone;
No soul was seen, no voice was heard around,
Barr'd was the gate, deserted was the ground,
So lonesome lifeless was the sacred place.

Before the portal musing stood a space Columbus, ere his modest rapping stirr'd Someone within, whose nearing step he heard; A man of age within the wicket stood Barcheaded, tall, behind the friar's hood; A smile illumined his unartful face, He was the Head, the Prior of the place. "Peace to the stranger knocking at our gate, Walk in, ye pilgrims, for the hour is late; We faithful welcome faithful men to stay, To eat our bread, and at our altar pray."

Thus Prior Perez de Marchena lures The strangers inside and the bolt secures; Then, pausing at the threshold's arched pass, Columbus gravely bows and answers thus.

"Ye large of heart, who for a purpose live, Who, having little, have so much to give, Whose word is manna to the weary soul, Who, scorning Fortune, know nor Fear nor Dole, Disdaining pomp and worldly state and show, God's peace on man with scraph's wand bestow, God's peace I seek alas! but fail to find The heart's repose, the ichor of the mind, By visions harassed, dreams undream'd before, Than fables dimmer, legendary lore, Tho' true to me, true as the sun I see, As true as Truth, clear as Reality.

"But when, since Time flies on unfolded wing, Since man of earth proclaims himself the king, Since, like the weed, rank Error spreadeth far, While Truth half-glimmers as a nebulous star, When rose a thinker, died a sage unfought Who durst give utterance to a deeper thought, Which dazes pedants reared in sapient schools, And stirs the clamor of twelve thousand fools? That in his world-career man moveth slow I wonder not since much of him I know, But wonder at the pace they progress call, I wonder, wonder that he moves at all.

With eye for ease, with doubt and wakeful greed, The yoke of habit, chains of race and creed, The dread of loss, the thirst for praise and gold, Lust for the new and bias for the old, He vainly strives his godlike bent to prove, His backward glance retarding every move.— For something born, some calling to fulfill, I feel a purpose, father, have a will Am undeterred things untried to try, Give mankind kingdoms or uncoffin'd die; But where find help? for, lest the emprise fail, No throne a minnow risks to bait a whale. For eighteen years in this my needful state I am for means a suitor to the great To search the lands in the remotest West Lands peopled thick, auspicious, yet unblest, For Christ to them did neither come nor rise, Man lives there happy, but unhappy dies. Spain lent an ear when I of kingdoms told, Of realms unruled, of conquest and of gold; Her wisest counselors said nor 'No' nor 'Aye,' Long irresolved, she still prefers delay Till, urged farther, after long debate, Once more she answered: 'Patience have, and wait,' My patience, Prior, richer than my purse, My patience failed not when my bread was scarce; I waited years, I waited night and day, I waited young, and, waiting, I am gray; Time fleets incessant, Death is in her train, Might Gaul not do what is undone by Spain?

Hers be the glory races to redeem, Hers fame and profit, she the poet's theme."

The worthy Prior strains his friendly eyes With utmost wonder, uncontroll'd surprise; Such lofty visions could not him displease As bodied forth the fiery Genoese; So looks a man who at his helpful door Relieves the hunger of unfriended poor And mid the paupers, who for pennies thank, A faded figure meets, a son of rank.— "And art thou he," the priest said to his guest, "Who for God's glory and our country's best Wouldst lift the veil from the dark-shrouded West? Thou art Columbus," here he seized his hand, "Whose visions are the wonder of the land, Who fires monarchs by the spirit's flame, Whom idle tongues the dreamer's dreamer name? Twice welcome, welcome to our hearth and bread, A rarer guest this threshold did not tread; We have a meal, a goblet of pure wine, A Spaniard's heart, a bedstead and a shrine; Come on, come on, I will myself attend On thee and thine; be thou my guest and friend."

Thus arm in arm the Prior and his guest Thro' aisle and courtyard reach the room of rest, A spacious seat with matting on the floor, The pleasant orchard close before the door With herb and blossom, and the grape between

The ivy leaves, beneath a vault of green. The table spread displays the frugal food, The wholesome diet of the brotherhood: Fresh eggs and butter, cream and cheese are there, The salads, too, the cloister's gardens bear, And from a tankard milk is flowing free, A cup of wine revives conviviality. Meanwhile to Palos word the Prior sends Requesting hither his respectful friends; Then round the Convent with unstudied ease The genial host his guest accompanies Along the cells, thro' narrow corridors; The hour steals by in social intercourse; For heart to heart, when generous natures meet, Responsive throb, and Friendship is complete. The shadows lengthen in the Convent's walls, The curfew bell in solemn quiet tolls, When on their knees, at the declining day, The pious monks in deep devotion pray. Then host and guest the belfry's height ascend, Whence westward they the Ocean's vast command, When grave the Prior in a solemn strain, As now the sun descends and glows the main, His pensive gaze yet brighten'd by the beam, As one in thought or speaking in a dream, Surveys the vastness of the mystic West, While these plain words he utters to his guest

"And tells thy soul, that far beyond that main, That none did traverse to return again,

There be a world as lovely as our Spain, A race of beings equal to our kind Endowed with Reason's faculty of mind? If this be so, and millions for thee wait To be redeemed, thy mission, friend, how great! Ah, could we like the blessed angels soar Above the cloud-swept peaks and thunder's roar The setting sun to follow distant-far, On seraph's pennons wing from star to star, How sweet, good Lord, how blissful, what a glee To dart along the starlit canopy, Survey this earth from towers in the skies, The nectar drink from springs in l'aradise, All regions view, redeem the races all, Hell-doomed nations thro' man's primal fall! But O! encumber'd with Sin's mortal coil, Which life a trial makes of grief and toil, Yea, fallen we, beset with foes unseen, By Error tempted, galled by the devil's spleen, How know, good Lord, when Passion stirs within, The holy yearning from enticing Sin!

"Twelve hundred years the legend of some lands, A fairy isle Saint Borondon commands
Some forty miles beyond the isles of Spain
Where seven castles rise oft from the main—
The naked eye can see the turrets plain—
With roofs of burnish'd gold, the seamen say,
Who, tempest-tossed, attempted there to stay, .
Where life enchanted, grisly shapes they saw,

Heard hollow yells that froze the heart with awe. When all is told it is the strangest tale Of ghastly spectres, magic groves, a vale From Palma seen at noontide with bare eyes, As lovely Zion saints tread in the skies. The long lost Eden some believe it is, Where with Elijah Enoch shares his bliss, It is the devil's island, others think, Who, luring victims, makes it rise and sink, Since they who landed on that charmed shore Went mad with horror or return'd no more. Our monks maintain there stands the devil's throne And fear the malice of the evil-one, Who shape of angel may or snake assume, When bent on goading sinners to their doom.— A righteous soul, a generous heart is thine, Thy purpose great, ingenious thy design; Yet might not Satan, who did Job ensnare, Saint Benedict drove of Virtue to despair, By impure fire thus enkindle thee To gratify some hellish deviltry? Protect us, Lord, when Passion stirs within, From baneful Error, hell-begotten Sin!"

The Tuscan sage whose cosmos-piercing eye Unroll'd to earth the secrets of the sky, Who, doing penance Wisdom to disprove, In torment cried: "And yet the earth doth move!" Nor firmer felt nor clearer in his mind. The fact he saw, the newest of its kind,

Than did Columbus as the friar spoke,
Who did the Lord against the fiend invoke;
And, as a child with filial reverence hears
A mother's warning, her love-fostered fears,
With soothing pathos worriment allays,
Her scruples conquers, her affection sways
By speech refreshing as the mildest breeze,
So gently at this hour the Genoese
Tradition, Legend, Truth and Fancy weaves,
What others thought, what he himself believes;
And while eve deepens and the landscape fades,
Night's thickening sable earth and sea invades,
Until the world seems buried in her shades,
He olden memories and lore recalls
To win his friend, and thus his answer falls.

"Thy warning, father, and thy holy fear,
Thy doubt not less do I than Faith revere,
Not less than love that fears demonian foes,
Invisible perils where the dearest goes;
Yet thought enlighten'd tells we need not here
A darker devil than blind Passion fear;
For Vice and Virtue, in our breast akin,
Like Truth and Error, spring all from within.—
My soul and Reason unabashed maintain,
And Science teaches, that beyond the main
Our sun irradiates a vast extent
Of lands unclaimed, a mighty continent,
Belike the empires beneath the sway
Of Mangi's Great Khan, Sovereign of Cathay,

Enthroned at Quinsai, princedoms at his feet, That great emporium where all races meet, The gorgeous East her jewel'd surplus sends From Han-Hai's borders to Sahara's sands. He, King of Kings and hoarded wealth untold, Whose throne of gems stands on a daïs of gold With crowds of princes to obey his nod, As monarch dreaded, worship'd as a god, Lives unenlightened, tho' an embassy In bygone ages sought the Holy See To crave Salvation for Great Tartary.— Four thousand islands scatter'd far and wide Each sweet and blooming as a beauteous bride, Xipangu homage undisputed pay, She rich and warlike, eastward of Cathay. Her King and Queen in halls gold-plated dwell, Their dazzling Court the Great Mogul's excel; Her hoards are guarded by a wondrous host Who, oft invaded, never a battle lost, Invulnerable thro' a magic stone, Which secret treasure jealously they own; An alkahest of such mysterious charm Which, sewn in limb, in body or in arm, Defies the blade, arrests the rush of gore, Seals up the wound, heals every hurt and sore.

"In those dominions of the populous East Many a scholar wander'd, many a priest, Full record leaving of the various states, All subject to inferior potentates,

Who bounden rule beneath the highest Court, Affairs of State have often to report.— But who of them may speak, whom to our strands The rolling surges throw from distant lands, Strange-featured beings of such skin and hair As to no race we know resemblance bear? And whence those plants no eve had seen before They had been drifted to Madeira's shore? Wood-carving oddly wrought found on high seas, Gigantic weeds, huge trunks of foreign trees By eastward currents wafted hitherward With olden rumors, recent views accord,— That Atalantis swallow'd by the sea In that tremendous night-catastrophe, When all an empire sunk to rise no more, And floods of lava Earth and Ocean tore, The chain of linked hemispheres hath rent, Thus severing a peopled continent From us by gulfs impassable thought for aye, Which view unhesitating I deny.

"I durst deny it when by royal hest
Hispania's dignitaries, deem'd her best,
At Salamanca gather'd to declare
Whether or not they my conviction share,
And thought I should their sane conception spare.
I durst deny it when, by friends upheld,
I faith and thought did interweaving weld;
When, short of reasons Reason to uproot,
They saints and Scripture quoted in dispute,

As if some allegoric tales of old,
Proverbial lore by bard or prophet told,
Were meant to quench the spirit's searching thirst,
Keep man forever groveling as at first.
With knowledge growing new ideals grow,
When thoughtful Reverence claims the place of Awe;
The priest of Thought on Wisdom's altar kneels
Whence Truth unrobed he to the world reveals;
As from our gaze the hoary mists disperse,
Forth blaze the wonders of the Universe,
The soul expands with each progressive age;
Than priest and prophet wiser is the sage,
He thinking, daring, showing more and more
The All-Wise greater than all gods of yore.

"Why heed the scoffer, covet worthless praise
Of a capricious vulgar populace
Who may to-day as idol one extol,
To-morrow fix his carcass on a pole,
Then gild his name, the martyr's death lament,
Then soil his grave, then set a monument?
But when I see men earnest, deep, sedate
Misquote old sermons in a lay-debate,
Meet fact with fiction, argument with sneers,
Confute the notion of two hemispheres,
Lactantius citing, since nor beast nor plant
Could grow head-downward on a continent,
Or man walk upward with his head below,
Or rain upfall, or waters hanging flow,
Meseems a fool could very wisely prove,

That as we forward stride we backward move.—
The daring eagle distances the hen,
Else bird as he, by spirit, wing, and ken,
And such the distance separating men,
One soaring high unlimited in sight,
The other squinting, like the fowl of night.

"Ah, let me change the uninspiring theme And with hoar prophets soul-entranced dream; Ay, dreams, sweet dreams, ve soothers of my heart, When hope was ebbing, visions did not part, And with new visions hope revived again, By dreams unhallow'd what is life but pain? When Friendship halted, Promise bore no fruit, Impatience chafing like a raving brute; When Poverty, gaunt Hunger at her heel, My dearest stung, my soul was dreaming still Of the great mission I must here fulfill. Shall Salem's oracle presage in vain, Who, bursting out in overwhelming strain, Foretells of times when earth from end to end One hymn of praise united shall upsend, His glory singing, who the heavens did span And built this planet for the joy of man.— I read the chronicles of cycles long, See battling armies crowding throng on throng, The nations rage, the warhorse wade in blood, Downtrodden infants, outraged maidenhood; In moonlit meadows thick, as leaves, are spread The ghastly forms of unsepulchred dead;

Black Night is hideous with the beastly growl Of preying wolves, the fell hyena's howl, Their hunger glutting, licking frozen gore Of deathful wounds that ope but bleed no more.— That this be past our Saviour suffer'd when He died for peace, redemption for all men. But vain is hope! yet should we not despair Tho' Love be scarce and Charity be rare.— I feel that God, who His Messiah sent To do His Will, chose me His instrument; And, as a cauldron full of seething oil, The heat undamp'd, is sure to overboil; Or, as the sea unsettled by a gale, Bounds unappeas'd till softer winds prevail, So am I burning, glowing with hot fire That with success will, or with life expire.

"I had a vision in the dead of night
When my first love came as a cherub bright;
Angelic robes of dazzling hues she wore,
Two shining wings her lustrous image bore,
Her eyes, two lights of mild cerulean gaze,
The dim horizon flooded with a blaze,
Which in the West a marvel did unfold—
A crystal mountain, crest and peaks of gold.
'From thence beloved,' she westward waved her hand,
'Thou shalt survey thy dreamed-of wonder-land.'
And, ere I knew, she nimbly bore me high
To that bright summit blazing in the sky;
Here, bursting on my sight, in radiance clad,

A picture weird, my dream's Elysium spread. And I, as one held long in durance drear, Restored to day, the sunbeam cannot bear, As one who lifelong in his fancy soars Around her figure he of all adores, Her meets unhoped in rarest beauty dressed, Her lips confessing what his heart confessed, Felt Hope's swift current striking me amain, Tears freely roll'd, they were no tears of pain. 'Unearthly glorious, generous world!' I cried, 'As for my Felipa for thee I sighed; Ah me, how grand! but that impassable sea What fearful chasm betwixt thyself and me! There smiles afar the Eden of my dreams, Unowned regions; happy life there teems In countless valleys cut by limpid streams; In meads and praries, forests unexplored, On rushing brooks no human foot did ford; Perchance you islands own Xipangu's rule, You mountains guard Cambalu's Great Mogul; But woe is me! if my endeavors fail What aim is mine, my strife of what avail!'

[&]quot;As mother soothing a fond infant's plaint, Serene as Azure, answer made my saint: 'He chosen shepherd, great beyond compeer, God's oracle, did close his earth-career On Pisgah's top, ordain'd by Heaven's decree But from afar the Promised Land to see; Unutter'd sorrow his, how godlike he!

Unlike Ben Amram thou wilt yet in full,
Thy faith unbroken, bud and blossom cull.'
As luscious music anger stills and grief
But, interrupted, breaks the soul's relief,
Emotions, quicken'd by the lull, return,
Sensation rises and the passions burn,
So dark unease oppressed heart and head,
Disquiet seized me as the vision fled;
Awoke, I shudder'd, shivering flesh and bone
And, rushing out, amid the stars alone
The silent air I drank, the cooling breeze;
The wheeling hosts above, they gave me ease;
There hung the Milky Way, the sun-cut Bear,
A star among the stars, sweet Hope was there.

"Many a crescent rounding since I saw,
Then dwindling pale, then nascent fuller grow,
At Cordova, aweary of my days,
Still fed on promises, vex'd by delays,
When, madly fired by a burning sense
Of wrong endured, years wasted in suspense,
The Sovereigns straightway for an answer I
Did urging ask; I craved the last reply.

"Fernando de Talavera's wisest head The wisest Junta in their Council led, And in his haughty mood gave brief advice:— Impossible it was to realize Such senseless emprise, unattempted since The world was made; my dream did none convince; Chimerical such venturesome a thing,
At best unworthy of a Queen and King.—
The last attempt the Cardinal of Spain
Had made for me before this new campaign
Begun, hath failed; the King, now full of war,
Would hear of naught but of the fallen Moor.

"Since tender childhood I my burdens bear And often fought the battle of despair Beside Colombo of piratic fame; My comrades fell, our galley sunk in flame; Thro' heavy billows I, with but an oar To buoy me up, did buffet for the shore. But wrath and grief combined smote my brain When thus decreed the mightiest of Spain; I felt as the my better life was slain. 'Not now, hereafter,' the courtly Monarch said When I at Seville my last homage paid; It was the work of Talayera's guile, Who stung my heart with his inhuman smile, Rejoicing, it appear'd, at my defeat, For my rejection was indeed complete.— I blush, good Prior, weakness to confess, But in that trying hour of my distress, With burning memories within the mind Of wasted manhood, want and woe behind, I. woman-like, did in my chamber weep; Nor was I soothed ere I fell asleep, When undenied, as my poor heart did pray, My gloom was broken by a golden ray.—

"It was another vision of a globe Beneath a vault as black as Pluto's robe; Impenetrable regions bleak and dread, Methought I trod the Valley of the Dead. No sound save of my armed stride the dint Was heard, which fell on juts and crags of flint, And woke an echo, as if some warrior rose From his dark tomb my inroad to oppose. In awe, that chill'd the marrow in the bone, And utmost silence I advanced alone By night enclosed, when, groping for a stone Around me I was happy in the dark To light on one wherewith to strike a spark, Long irresolved whether it be right To lift the veil from undefiled Night, But soon my longing grew the realms to see, Soon flint smote flint, the echo ringing free; From cliff to eliff, methought there was response From spirit lip or sympathetic stones; Each stroke a scintillation skyward sent, A flight of stars to stud the firmament With myriad eyes, live orbs which glowing shone Within the welkin's blue, a burning zone. Then, as by earthquake once in Italy The flood, subsiding, left a yawning sea, Abysmal deeps of sights so dismal fell That eye was loath on such dread scenes to dwell, And prayers rose, that soon a swelling tide The bare-laid horrors may forever hide, So, as the desolation I surveyed,

The doleful sights my frighten'd soul dismayed And, turning skyward, I for darkness prayed. For if in paroxysm her liquid womb, That breaks thro' craters to make life a tomb, In torrents red, Earth, spouting upward, hurl'd A lava-deluge surging round the world, And Death of all would but one being spare, A lonely hermit mourning in despair, That being peradventure shared my mood In that ill-fraught, appalling solitude.

"Near by a hill I clamber'd to its height To view the landscape now unveil'd to sight; Black woodland stretched far athwart a heath; Unflowing streams and lakes devoid of breath, And mountains black all rapt in silent awe, And soundless glens and desolate rocks I saw; And life extinct lay thick in heaps of bones, Huge limbs of brutes, prodigious skeletons. Then murmured 1: 'How horrible, Good Lord! Once beauty all by Thine creative word, Who canst, I do believe, dead things restore, And make them live and flourish as before? And: 'As before!' replied a myriad voice; Then moved a breath that made a rustling noise, The prophet's miracle enhanced occurr'd, All turned fresh and green, the dead bones stirr'd; In less a space than takes to give the tale, Life sang and laugh'd in forest, mount and vale; Zephyr was skimming, Spring's delightful king,

Along the mead, sweet odors on his wing,
And, playing gently, glorious made the scene,
A blaze of colors in a-sea of green.
Strange men, wild-visaged, statures full of lust
Uprose in throngs, as if just sprung from dust.
Like those whom Jove for Eacus made when left
Unkinged by Juno, of his men bereft;
And, as in May's sweet morrow earth looks blest,
The region look'd a seat of peaceful rest,
And ere I woke, methought a voice did call:
'Thy faith, Columbus, Faith hath done it all.'

"Are visions fumes of overheated brain, Void exhalations of the void Inane, Or signs presageful of events unborn, Which good forebody or of ill forewarn? With breath of fire, speech of living flame The wizard prophet, in Jehovah's Name, Links earth to heaven with a golden chain, And who dares say, that he foretold in vain? Since he, who preaching wander'd forth from Ur, He foremost leading, God's first warrior. To him who, bleeding, wore the thorny crown And died forgiving, while the skies did frown, Great seers rose to make man onward march, Of mystic visions building arch on arch. Till, like the bow, that mirrors forth the sun. The sky-reared pyramid they stand upon, While at its base unthinking mortals plod, Upleads the thoughtful to the feet of God.

Wipe from the chronicles all Delphian lies, Dodona's wiles, Eleusis' mysteries; Forever silence Heliconian glee,
The Muse be mute, dull be Philosophy,
The world will move, the prophets being there,
Who, Atlas-like, from earth the heavens bear,
See God in man, all men in God declare;
In mystic visions, speech of molten gold
The heavenly Kingdom, peace below foretold.

"Must not, ere this the angel's trumpet sounds,
This orb be travers'd to its utmost bounds?
Ere faithless tribe faith in our Saviour own,
Must they not know him? they not to us be known?
And, glorious thought! to bend the Orient's lords
With dashing armies, inexhaustible hoards
To one high purpose—seal the Caliph's doom,
Who plagues the pilgrim, holds the sacred tomb,
Manures his deserts with good Christian blood,
In Christian houses fosters Widowhood.

"If I succeed, I shall have lived for aught,
And should I fail, then for the Lord I fought;
But in that Vast of Mystery which bears
The seed and fruitage of the Universe,
Methought I heard, responsive to a sigh,
A whisper come, as from a sphere on high,
With comfort laden, a response so clear
That from the eye it drew the joyful tear;
And as at midnight philomela's tunes

The wooer soften, who with Love communes, With her he courts and hears the blissful 'Aye,' So, courting Heaven's Grace I nightly pray To help me onward on my thwarted way, When spirits answer from the starry dome: 'Thy day, Columbus, wait, thy day will come.'"

Now had the sun, ere half this tale was told, His glories canceled of suffused gold, While fully rounded with ascending might A rising moon of color'd silver-white Sent forth her beam half-broken by a haze, As a cathedral window when ablaze With mingled glare of multicolor light The eye attracts amid the shades of night. Within the Convent every hum did cease, The air was dim, there moved a gentle breeze, And they who stood upon the belfry's tower The spiritual spell felt of the hour, And thought they heard the last expiring sound Re-echo hollow underneath the ground, As if the dead monks in their breathless home, Each other mocking, jeered: "Thy day will come." A moment, conquer'd by that mystic law Of life and death, they stood in silent awe, Rapt in those dreams forever undefined, Except by symbols mind imparts to mind; And, ere a sound did break the ghostly spell, All on a sudden jarring rung the bell, A heavy weight against the Prior fell,

Who, frighten'd, cross'd himself and leaped aside And: "Christ's blest Mother, plead for us!" he cried. "It is my son," half-laughing said the guest, "My sleepy Diego," laughter told the rest.

The child unheeded dozed against the wall And, tumbling, seized the rope to break his fall. Below the monks alarmed left their cells, Each other asking: "Who did ring the bells?" "Ah, there the devil or the Moor they fear, Or else suspect unholy doings here,"

The Prior said, and, turning where he stood, Sent down his voice to calm the brotherhood.

"Let us descend," he spoke now to his guest,
"Thyself and child 'tis time ye go to rest.
Insatiate I, too fond of treat so rare,
Could give my sleep thy company to share.
But hence thou shalt not go, the Lord forefend,
Before our Queen a line reads of my hand;
Blest Mary had scaree purer soul than she
Who for long years confess'd her sins to me,
And, tho' nor Cardinal nor statesman I,
My plea will bring a royal, frank reply.
To-morrow, then, with friends to counsel us
We shall in concert things and means discuss,
Leaving to Him, who guides our will and soul,
To guide us safely toward the destined goal."

BOOK III.

ARGUMENT.

The Prior's friends meet Columbus. Who they are. A meal is served and the consultation follows. The host states the object of the meeting. The proposed Quest to be considered. The emprise is favored by Garcia, who points to the successes of Portugal in the field of discovery. His question put to Columbus whether he had asked King John to furnish him with an armada, draws forth a scathing arraignment of that King's perfidy, and the circumstances are given. Rodriguez tells of an adventure confirming the idea of Columbus. The dangers depicted alarm Diego, who is appeased by his father. Alonzo Martin Pinzon is certain that there is land in the West, and offers material and personal assistance. Juan Perez, the Prior, concludes to send a messenger to the Queen now encamped before Granada, Columbus being detained to await the reply.

Thy multitudinous billows darting far,
Ethereal spaces kindling, flaming star,
Thou dost those sacred fire-oceans heave
That since creation thy effulgence weave;
Whence wheeling thus, life-giving, welcome sphere,
With none to lead thee save that Charioteer,
Whom hosts above adore, and spirits here?
Thy coming and thy going blest are they,
Tho' most beloved to me thy early ray,
Thy crimson'd plume, the blush of dewy morn,
To patients grateful, fever'd and pain-worn,
By spectres haunted, nightmares chaos-born.
Yet Night love-courted, star-eyed peace in store,
Soft-bosomed Slumber healing many a sore,

And Thought sky-soaring dawning on the mind, Mysterious visions, feelings undefined, Are thine, dim goddess, thine are Rest and Dream. Thine sacred Silence, thine that silver beam Of magic splendor cast on land and sea, Thine all the awe of ghostly Mystery.— When soul and eye, in Empyrean lost, The constellations number, host on host, While, like a bomb, in her stupendous race, Earth spins her orbit over gulfs of space, Her children dreaming, as in mother's arm The babe love-cradled, shielded from all harm. Who hears the rustle not of spirit-wings, Hears not the footfall of the King of kings? Whose bosom heaves not with a yearning sigh? Who asks not: Why this All, and wherefore I? Why longs my soul to fly to vonder spheres? Why struggles man, why sorrow here, why tears? Then, shadows dear, time-wither'd figures gone Once more we rise when I, with Night alone. Old scenes revisit, faded long ago, With forms endeared, now phantoms, O, my woe! Go, sweet illusion, unspeaking shades, away! I love the nightingale, fear not the fay, Nor do Hecate's ministers I dread, Who fright the living, dance amid the dead: But when, undreaming in thy sabled peace, The restless mind recalls old memories, Ah, me! of all that was or sad or gay, Hope looks for comfort to the rising day.

A sun as radiant from a dome as blue As when his beam first fell on Eden's dew, Such light as falls upon the groves that bloom With orange blossom rare in Northern gloom, High-priestly robed, from Orient issued forth, The West enlightening, cheering South and North; And, as he rose and made the welkin clear, A myriad-concert burst upon the ear From hill and valley, meadow, thicket, wood Of air musicians in delightful mood. The golden flood gilds La Rabida's tower, The matin bell tolls the canonic hour, Which, after vigils, consecrates the day, When from his cell the monk comes forth to pray, And, having prayed, works, till of duty free, He seeks his food in the refectory. The Prior's servitors obey his hest And spread a table for himself and guest, And many more of Palos, worldly wise, Of name and weight, entitled to advise In things where Science and Experience rise To give incentive to great enterprise.

Three manly figures—let them here be named And live in song forever manly famed—Confront Columbus and, surprised all three, The stranger treat with reverend courtesy. First Garcia Fernandez, deep in lore, Who to her height the healing science bore, An unappeased mind, fond of the sea,

Given, besides, to new astronomy, With genial friendliness, inclined to please, A hearty hand extends the Genoese: "This hand, señor, conveys a heart's concern To gain a friend, a friend give in return To one of whom the world doth speak and read, As bold in temper as resolved in deed, Unparallel'd in venturesome design, A man of spirit and of ends divine," The wise physician said, and left his friend, Alonzo Pinzon, shake the stranger's hand. Adventurous, among the boldest he In Palos stood, a seaman strong and free, Who knew the brim of Heaven's canopy Did not the world confine, as others thought; He with old Ocean many a battle fought, Spain's islands knew, was far beyond them known. Besides, reputed wealthy in his town. His words were few, unfitted for debate, But none of Palos spoke with greater weight.— Next him Rodriguez, a tawny countenance his, With years behind him spent on stormy seas, His pilot grasp the stranger's hand made feel, Who dream'd not then, how once that grip of steel Mid foul revolt, defiant on the wave, Undaunted will his Chief's inferiors brave. Then others came, who shook the stranger's hand; Then came the monks, who at the meals attend, Then died all converse, carnest mark'd each face While on his knee the Prior offered grace.

"Power Supreme from whom life's blessings come, Who made this earth and built the lucent Dome, In sunshine gracious, gracious in the storm, Man's Father Thou, Sustainer of the worm, Unfathomed Grace, unbounded Goodness Thine Who dost in Love the mortal race enshrine, Our daily wants with plenteous hand supply, Our heart with hope, great Lord, we know not, why. Accept this prayer wafted to the skies As once Thou didst the High-Priest's sacrifice; Thy Peace unite what Hatred does divide, Control our wishes, Father, be our Guide!" And "Amen," echoes, as the prayer ends; Around the board, as old convivial friends, They eat and jest, and then an hour devote To spicy stories, mirthful anecdote. As Childhood fond of strange adventurous tales A hero's presence with glad wonder hails, Him questions frequent, anxious to be thrill'd, For marvels thirsting till the thirst is still'd,— An ear for him the Spaniards ready had, Whose name their fancy with vague rumors fed; And when from table risen, leading slow, The host his guests an airy space did show, Therein each one an easy seat assigned, As if to tell the promptings of his mind, Grave Silence ruled, until his soul the host Felt moved—he thought so—by the Holy Ghost To learn the counsel of the worldly man, When thus deliberate the good priest began.

"This meeting here convened on my accord, Call not presumption, friends; it is the Lord Who in His Wisdom reaches higher ends Thro' lowly messengers He ofttime sends To prove the atom and the mountain His: I prayed for Guidance and He taught me this.— A hardy fighter who can strike a blow. Surprise a city or unhorse a foe. Will soon respect command, attention draw: Yet they who made our tedious annals grand Did neither armies conquer nor command But from the humblest houses sprung, and rose On all a world their blessings to impose. A shepherd poor did light from Heaven bring, A shepherd was Judea's bard and king. That king whose lineage we to Joseph trace, Whose humblest born rules King of Love and Grace, The world's crown'd Master, Saviour of the race. How else, distrustful of inspired thought, In our frail state, could we accomplish aught If, disobeying tokens from On High. We ever wavered, unprepared to try, And such as dare we would our help deny? No credit mine for deeds uncommon bold. I was a monk, as Prior I am old; Nor, like some primate, during this crusade In lieu of crosier, seizing lance or blade, Or foes to combat or their nests invade. Inflamed with valor unresisting strong, Did I ambitious for distinction long;

Ambition bides not where the hermits dwell, Unworldly dreams the cloister haunt and cell, Where souls devout ruled by superior sway, The saints obeying, God's behest obey.

"Yet hermits lived of uneclipsed fame, Like him who, barefoot, Europe set on flame, When mighty kingdoms quicken'd to his will, Whose thrilling cry did Pope and sovereign thrill, Mohammed's cohorts worsted in the fight, Who heard not of the deathless anchorite? I think the times, until our war began, Since those crusades produced no famous man. Unlike the brute, by instinct unconfined, The wonder's wonder is the human mind, Which fathoms Nature to her secret core Her curtain draws her inside to explore, Or joins the links of life's unbroken chain, Or things, once lost, to Knowledge gives again; And since, undower'd with the eye that sees Thro' dark and distance sphynx-like mysteries, The most of us do unenlighten'd live. Why not our blessing, not assistance give To such as feel a mission in the soul, Who strive great things to conquer or control?

"Struck by this thought I here detain'd our guest Who in his mind a world sees in the West, But unassisted cannot make the Quest; And, having found Hope's echo dumb with us, Bewailing years he in suspense did pass,
And told to wait until Granada fall,
Ye see Columbus on his way to Gaul.—
Ye know how few who wear the friar's robe
Had chance to nurse the science of this globe;
But seamen, ye, who ride the billow's crest,
Which heaves your vessels bearing toward the West,
And learned friends, whose mental range extends
Beyond the waters travers'd by these friends,
What, having power and a judgment free
The Quest to venture, were your last decree?"

The self-made judges silent sate a while, In Garcia's eye there played a kindly smile, And, as a master who with knowing case A studious pupil ready stands to please, With pleasure answers questions wisely put Strewing the seed, uncertain of the fruit To spring therefrom in ages yet to come, The wise physician, feeling well at home Near one revered that honor'd him so high, Had this to say his friend to satisfy.

"Great problem this for some one great to solve, It more than thought does hardihood involve To reach bare fact, instead of effort spent In subtle speech or cunning argument, Which neither him convince who cannot see, Nor him in want of faith and sympathy. With morbid patients mine is oft the task

To answer queries they would urging ask About hereafter: whether I was sure, That souls departed somewhere else endure Eternal torments in a dreadful hell Or, being righteous, in Walhalla dwell; Or, whether Faith deceived us, after all And life is ended with the hearse and pall? Say what you choose, the doubter will distrust And die a doubter, doubting to the last. To one who press'd me with tenacious doubt I answered: 'Friend, when dead we find it out.' So here as elsewhere, this be my reply: If things be doubtful, end not with the: Why? Proceed like Science in her searching greed, Look into matters, test them by the deed. The fact alone with doubt hath potent sway, The fact, the fact against all doubt array.— Were I a king my fleet would search the sea If not for kingdoms, then for Certainty, The Quest were his who Glory loves and Truth, And in ripe age the fire feels of youth; Would ask nor fool nor sage for 'No' or 'Ay,' But gave him aid, who great things dares to try.

"See Portugal, unlucky in the field When warlike Spain she bearded shield to shield, On Afric's coast her peaceful flag unfold, Her coffers fill with ivory and gold, She earning glory on the distant seas. Despite of omens, evil prophecies.

The astrolabe, a triumph of her wise,
Her seamen tempts beyond her native skies,
For, independent hence of coast and star,
He dares adventure into waters far;
His King's high spirit serves him as a guide;
To find new regions is that Monarch's pride,—
Did you, señor, ere setting face toward Gaul,
Your plan divulge to John of Portugal?
Of all the princes none will readier be
To send you honor-crown'd across the sea
Than such a ruler, such a man as he."

"Behold me here," the Genoese did rise, Indignant ardor flaming from his eyes, "Behold me here, señores, a pilgrim poor, With much endured, with more yet to endure, With youth behind unprofitably gone, With hopes unrealized, a prize unwon, Yet should for naught King John hath might to do Transaction I with his false Court renew. Wrath of my soul, that seething overboils When baneful Vice unwary Virtue foils, Shall base-born Guilt the rigors bear of Law And royal Treason be condoned with awe? Judge unimpassioned, Spaniards, I beseech, If Honor should a lesson Falsehood teach. Tho' it be sceptred, tho' a nation's knee Low-bend before perfidious Majesty.— It was in Manhood's prime when I to roam Throughout the world have left my sunny home;

 Λ sunnier spot, the Λ Andalusia be The balmiest clime this side of Italy, I never saw, will never see again, Than that I grew on and forsook with pain. Ill-fated Genoa, my native land, Built on Liguria's range superbly grand, Noble in peace, invincible in war, The fleets of nations anchor'd at her shore, Her banners flying in the rich Levant, She, ununited, would my suit not grant When, full of vigor, I besought she may Extend her rule to Mangi or Cathay; For spirit-broken, she her sons of ease And those of labor, who her wealth increase, Still sees engaged in self debasing self, Tho' dead the strife of Ghibelline and Guelph,— As when a mother whom her scion brings A precious pearl she sorrow-stricken flings Away unvalued, he with sense of loss And wounded love distracted elsewhere goes. So I, unwelcomed, fled my mother's hearth, Henceforth a pilgrim roving on this earth, Till, like those powers which the magnet rule, Direction giving to the senseless hull, I, overpowered, homaged her control, Whom worshipful I loved in Portugal; A seaman's daughter, orphan'd long before I met and loved her, dear forevermore. Love-hallow'd days were they, but O, the grief! No ease for her, for parents no relief!

"Long moons at Court my scheme unheeded lay, For kings are slow and courtiers like delay, But the like snail in zig-zag line they drudge, Slow-speeding Time the slowest spurns to budge. What think our wise?' his Royal Grace exclaims, And in an order priest and layman names; Deep-studied men, physicians two of them, Roderigo, Joseph, and the famous Behm, And other figures, ranking high in State, Priest Cazadilla, fluent in debate, Count Pedro de Meneses, glib of tongue, And last myself, admitted thereamong.— Six days we met, with doubt and fear I strove, With fact and thought I Scripture interwove To brace my cause, until I made it clear, That if this planet be at all a sphere, A man who westward steers must needs return From Eastern regions and some wonders learn. Vain effort mine to cure the color-blind: Near-sighted they, who see not with the mind. Tell him of God who reads not in the skies His fire-symbols, blank to thoughtless eyes.— As men mature dismiss the prattling child, The sages listen'd, nodded wise and smil'd; The priest, with faith as his impregnable fort, A sermon thunder'd 'gainst the King and Court, Who had no right, he said, and were to blame For ventures fanciful wild schemes to frame, While poor the land, unsafe the conquests made, Which proud Iberia might one day invade.

"The Bishop's censure stung Don Pedro's pride, Who would with none his country's fame divide, Her triumphs won on undisputed seas. Her treasures flowing from discoveries; And as great Cæsar, smitten dead, did feel No stab hurt more than his friend's murderous steel, The Count unartful but with pathos grave The ruling Bishop this plain answer gave. 'What picture this, thus darkly drawn by whom? What cloud portentous shadow casts or gloom Upon this land thro' peaceful conquest grown, The wand in hand, why our success disown? Than war-fame nobler are the works of peace, Our Golden Coast is more than Golden Fleece. And Europe's homage paid us on all shores For wealth and knowledge, coupled with rich stores Of costly product, adding to our ease And sense of pride, untasted luxuries, Who of the nations would of these not boast, Of bloodless triumphs and a Golden Coast? Of argonauts who from the leaping surge, As mermen sea-enchanted, oft emerge; Of busy marts, which more than iron wall From base Dishonor save dear Portugal? Mature in age with men and means to rise, A Prince who glories in bold enterprise, A hardy race inspired by Success, To rust inactive, crawl in idleness, When chances tempt one for a prize to race, Say, where, in fame, is such a people's place?

Ill-fate betide me if I know a spur That makes me hotter than the tide of War, The shock of battle and the sight of gore; If ugly scars, that warrior's skin adorn. I rate not more than dastards noble-born Of sleek appearance by no hardship worn; Yet cheerless fire his of hellish glow That reddest glows while human blood doth flow. While widows mourn and orphans weep and sigh, And smoke and sorrow cloud a sombre sky; Of him at best kind aftertimes will say: Of all the slavers he the most did slav; For if, imbruted now, man ever find The saner balance of his godlike mind, Of God's dear blessings choicest will be peace Within, without, and Murder's lust will cease.

"'But laurel, flower and wreath and song will grace Their names for aye who, self-forgetful, face The unattempted hazard light to spread And to God's Kingdom new dominion add.

"'The Church, your Eminence, I pardon crave, With mandate here the fallen race to save, Speaks not thro' you, whose work is to redeem The blind from Error in her cause supreme; For well you know, the Catholic builds no home Without the might and influence of Rome; Since where our caravel her anchor throws There lands the priest to stay, and there he grows.

"'Is Portugal too poor, too small to rise, Too weak to race for an imperial prize? The rule of Reason who will not avow? The world a crown sets gladly on his brow Who slays the monsters of her foggy brain In haunted woods or on the mystic main; And whomsoever, be he prince or king, This mariner shall to Decision bring, Oblivion shall reserve his name for praise For everlasting service done the race, And Portugal who wavers, lamed by Fear, To sail on queenly in her fame-career, She, hale and flourishing, will live to see The near fulfillment of this prophecy.'

"Displeased the Bishop, pleased the laymen seemed, In eyes enkindled manly fervor gleamed; The Count's remonstrance conjured up a split, A rush of temper and a tilt of wit; Too long a tale that sapience to rehearse That from its rat-hole sweeps the Universe. There was no way; a folly was the Quest Of rumor'd realms impossible in the West, The King's cosmographers did coolly state, And thus unhopeful ended this debate.

"As youth unharnessed, golden dreams in head Of rank and office, and the sylph to wed, First unresigned new discomfiture bears Till, tried by trials, braced by trying years,

He swims ungrumbling on life's gliding stream, So I ungracious saw my firstling dream Ungently handled, and I felt as one Who had a sapphire and hath lost the stone.— Enlivening Hope! Sweet music was the call To meet the Monarch at his audience hall: And when King John his pleasure tersely told, To have my charts before his eyes unroll'd, Then to my claim, to have the sole command And partial profit of discover'd land Attention giving, graciously referred, My heart dilated and my soul was stirred. Never before and never afterward Felt I the might, the spirit of the Lord As at that hour; I glowed and only know That with my joy my speech did overflow.

"Dismissed consoled, I counted day by day
Full twenty days; the King had naught to say;
Another week's impatience well I bore
When Chance at sunset led me to the shore
Where freighted vessels or arrive or go,
While they unloading bustle to and fro.
Observing unobserved, I walk'd the strand,
Where men-of-war and royal caravels land,
And overheard two mariners I knew,
The one a pilot, the other of the crew,
Berate the King and Court with coarse disdain,
Who with my charts had sent them on the main.
No more I heard. Suspicion traced the rest;

My maps aboard, a vessel toward the West In search of land sail'd by King John's behest, And Bishop Cazadilla fathered all This base deceit to serve his Portugal.

"Degenerate age that beggar-tricks reviles And on Grand-Villainy disportful smiles! O, for a scorpion whip to punish Lie, A hideous brand for titled Infamy! God purge this globe of Sin and Vice in vogue, A priest a liar and a king a rogue! Sweet Grace enthroned on high gave us the choice Betwixt the good and evil, and that voice Embedded in our being's holiest part, The gift of Conscience and the might of heart; For Beauty love, for Grandeur throb and thrill, Immortal dreams, the majesty of will, Which, as the Calmuck, rating tinsel more Than sterling jewels, mines of precious ore; Or, like the Edomite who birthright sold, We often sacrifice to lust of gold!

"I swore—and since Temptation I withstood—I swore to shun that Court and neighborhood; I swore unvengeful, swore to sever straight Myself from that dishonor'd Potentate; And, come what may, Dishonor, I declare, Shall not with Honor fame and profit share. A royal villain is a thing as mean As Villainy in lazar's gabardine."

With clenched fists he spake in closing this Unpleasant story, anxious to dismiss Remembrances which made his temper sore. His generous nature stirring to its core; He spake like him whom Treason sends adrift, Who, trusting Friendship, loses friend and gift. They in his hearing deeply rued his wrong, And their displeasure found in one a tongue. Rodriguez rose unable to control A feeling heart which, as the Ocean's roll, Once moved by tempest, 'gainst all hindrance leaps, With scorn armadas from his bosom sweeps. Rodriguez knew his rudder-wielding hand, That ship and seamen moved at his command, And Lope boasted of no second one To match the nerve of this her giant son; Of palms as horny as untanned hide, Less firm on shore than on the heaving tide, But frank as infant, guileless as a dove, With thirst for Honor and a heart for Love, He was admired much and sought as friend. Who ever would the weak assistance lend.

"I shall the bounds not of my freedom pass," Rodriguez stammeringly opened thus, "Who am no scholar, yet no thing of glass, Eschewing contact with an iron pot; To right a wrong I, too, my battle fought, Have weathered many times an augry sea, Have choked villains, smitten Villainy

Wherever Circumstance bade Manhood rise
To prove the virtue of Self-sacrifice.
I know not much, but have enough of brain
To read and spell, and write, and cipher plain,
And, while a boy as yet in Lope's school,
The teacher said: 'Sebastian is no fool,
And if he work, as all great Spaniards did,
He might one day be famous as the Cid.'
But be it so, or be it as it be,
As hell I hate the sight of Infamy,
And hold a villain prince is worser than
A lying dunce, who is no titled man;
And could I help, that Bishop would sustain
The soundest whipping as a thief profane.

"About the Quest and what there be to find, It brings an awful story to my mind The victim told me, whom in saddest plight I succor brought, restoring him to light.— In early years a schoolmate robb'd at sea Invoked revenge on that red savagery, Which coast and ocean kept in terror then, When either Corsair, Moor, or Saracen Inhuman revel held on shore and wave And few had heart those bestial crews to brave, Bold striplings fond of venture as of sport, Three score of us equipped in our port A ship with armor fatal work to do On any pirate galley, any crew, And, having prayed, we southward took the main,

Then turned sharp to the South-West of Spain, With purpose fix'd to strike the first we see Of nest or keel controll'd by Piracy. We left with daybreak, nightfall came and night We onward glided with no ship in sight: Not unaware of danger eye and ear Our watchmen strained, but nowhere far or near Was indication of a wilv foe. Yet ere we knew it we received the blow Which made our vessel, like a nutshell reel, And, answer making, we fell keel on keel. As oftentimes the fowl, whom out of sight The eagle watches ere he strikes in flight. She, unresisting, unprepared to strive To save her brood and save herself alive, So we, astounded, first gave hasty way, But soon a shout sent sixty to the fray. We struck unmerciful, we knew not whom We grappled with in the unbroken gloom. 'Make light!' I cried, and fifteen torches burned Then in the glare we ship and men discerned; Infernal shapes of bloody aspect they, Algeria's scum, mad wolves in the affray.

"By hook and chain we caught their galley's hold, Like frighten'd brutes our shivering vessels roll'd; The decks resounded with the clash of steel, Some wounded fell, some stagger'd to the keel; The clamor grew, wild curses shook the air, The pirates fought, like demons in despair.

For him I loved I sent a searching eye, I saw him stabbed sink, I saw him die; Transpierced he sunk, and yet he said 'Good by.' No more he spake, turning his glazen eyes And ghastly face to unresponsive skies; I ever see him as he falls and dies. My vengeance burn'd, the sword I found too light For such a friend with such a fee to fight; An iron bar—I had it somewhere stand— I plied instead of my impotent brand, I did it hotly to avenge my friend; I struck, nine pirates overboard I sent, They crushed and mangled by mine instrument; I struck relentless till the task was done. No pardon granting, no I spared not one; I hated life, my truest friend was gone.— Our dead we counted; seven pale and cold And thirteen bleeding our deep sorrow told; I seldom weep, but on that night I shed Hot-flowing tears; the sea received our dead. Late rose the moon, the wounded claimed our care; We homeward sped, no time to waste was there.— Within their ship we naught of value found Save underneath a frightful creature bound, A man in figure, shaggy as a beast We took aboard and hurried, ere the East Her gateway open'd to send forth the day; With kindly breezes we pursued our way, Having unhooked first the pirates' boat, A graveless graveyard, left at large affoat.

"And who that creature, who by gesture spoke? Kind treatment at my house his muteness broke, When, sinking slow, he piecemeal told his life, And died attended by myself and wife.

In thoughtless youth given to drink and game, A girl he loved, another loved the same;

The rivalship bore hatred as its fruit;

Hot-headed he, his rival was a brute,

Who drugg'd his adversary in the dark

Then on the high-sea left him in a bark,

A fragile thing, he thought it sure would break,

Or with the victim sink before he wake.

"The potion worked; asleep for days the breeze
The sleeper carries toward his miseries,
And as the eyes he opes dread-stricken he
Beholds himself upon a shoreless sea;
It is no dream but palpable distress,
No dream his fate, whose author he may guess.
Then Thirst and Hunger came and, strange to say,
He bread and water finds for many a day,
As tho' a flinty heart could generous be,
Or gave the food to lengthen misery.

"With wind and wave beneath a parching sun He drifted, drifted, days in weeks did run; Whence could help come in such a waste as this? A board betwixt dear life and the abyss; But Hope of heavenly birth, till Death relieves The heart of hoping, to our nature cleaves,

A cheering spirit brightening fear and gloom,
The cradle gilding, gilding pall and tomb.—
At sundown there is yet no sign of land,
At sunrise, lo! you looms a hilly strand,
Whence yelling throngs, as maniaes, howling chide
The strange intruder; some the surf divide,
And in a twinkling round the vessel crowd
With threatening aspect, exclamation loud;
Her seizing savagely they haul and yell;
On shore they clamor, like the fiends of hell,
But show submission to a leader's will,
Who seems the office of a chief to fill.

"Man-eaters they, a race of horrid lust,
Who warfare love, of captives make repast;
Undressed, unhoused, apes in shape of men,
Their haunt the wood, their resting place the den,
They, wolfish greedy, foxy wiles display
In guarding closely those they catch to slay.
Not mine the tongue to paint the pitch of woe,
Yet pain and horror in this world I know
That wrinkle Childhood, blighten in one hour
The crop of Manhood, nip of Youth the flower.—

"Unbearded young when pent up in a cave,
The third week found him old, white-headed, grave,
Entomb'd alive to fatten and to feed
Those horrid bipeds of infernal greed.
He curbs despair, tho' Death stares in his eye:
Unlimited the succor of the sky.

"A savage war of extirpating rage
The cannibals with fierce invaders wage;
Confusion rules, then clash and clamor die,
The strangers leave, the man has chance to fly;
The nearest forest harbor gives and food,
He lives on roots and drinks the river's flood;
A brute with brutes he sleeps upon a tree,
In dread of man, he likes the brute to see,
Content thus far with hopeful liberty.

"So weeks pass by, the seasons come and part, He longs for home, consumed with ache of heart; The sea, the sea, belike there be a boat, A raft, a board or anything affoat To drift him eastward, but the horrid foe, He fears, is lurking and he dares not go Beyond the forest, till one moonless eve Inspired courage his retreat to leave. He steals along, the eye descries no light, No sign of life disturbs the still of night; He nearer draws the hateful den he fled, The silence seems the silence of the dead; Daybreak reveals Desertion everywhere And, joy untold! his craft, his boat is there, A wither'd thing, for sure, but on that strand He weeps and sobs, and hugs her as a friend. He hunts for food, fresh water he provides, Then kneels to pray, and then the wave divides; Auspicious breezes help, land fades behind And, carried eastward, him the pirates find.

"Thus much he told me; here the story ends Confirmed since by many of his friends,
Whom I have met, who knew him disappear—
Unhappy man once to a mother dear,—
But learn'd from me the course of his career;
It were a sin to think the martyr lied,
Why should he thus, a saint before he died?"

As oft the reader of romantic woes
In look and feature his compassion shows,
In mind each scene reviews, each person's trait,
Feels for the hero, sorrows for his fate,
So lost in reverie with an earnest face,
The tale's adventures pensive they retrace,
While Diego, nestled on his father's breast,
With tears entreats him to forego the Quest.

"Go not, my father, the man-eaters fear;
Thou far in danger, I forsaken here.—
My mother dead—and our deserted home—
Go not, my father, O, thou wilt not come,
And I, an orphan, weeping on the shore,
My sorrow drowned in the Ocean's roar,
Shall wait in vain, my father, far away
By them devour'd, who cat the men they slay."

This tearful sorrow, welling from the eye Of Innocence, Columbus moves to sigh; But soothing word has he, and kiss and smile His child's anxiety thus to beguile:

"Diego dear, courageous son of mine.
God's children we, our shield His Love Divine,
Who guards us fondly wheresoever we,
On land our Lord, our Father on the sea;
Then, not unarmed would I cross the deep,
But men and cannon had wild hordes to sweep
From off the earth, should war, in lieu of peace,
The savage choose beyond the bounding seas;
Where Love breeds Hatred, sacred teachings fail,
There lombards thunder, force with force prevail—
And thou, my son, wilt live those realms to see
And grow a man of name and gallantry;
Shalt reap the harvest of the seed I sow,
Befriended live, while on my Quest I go."

Here, as in times of hospitable love, When for one guest a score of neighbors strove, The friends competed, urging strong and mild The claim to harbor the grief-stricken child.

"My home be his; among my children he Shall find the fondness of a mother's knee, While I, permission granted, sail with you As pilot, boatswain, or one of the crew; For never had I wish as strong as this To search the world beyond unridden seas, See things unseen, be of the hardiest one And have my story graven on my stone," Rodriguez said, and had a rival soon In the physician, craving as a boon

The guarding of the boy. The Prior smil'd And thought his Convent guarded well the child, When to his height Alonzo Pinzon rose To state his mind, and this he did propose.

"Hear me, señores, last not least to claim
A bent for hazards and a thirst for fame,
Since gain unhazardous brings Courage low,
That shrinks unseemly when the tempests blow,
While him inured to hardship, storm and toil
Nor cloudy skies nor envious tongues may foil;
Rich harvest his whose Autumn finds him gay,
Whose Winter bears the green delights of May.
And when the clod falls on his coffin's lid,
The records blazon what he was and did.
High seas I climb'd and saw most wondrous things,
Such as from West the restless Ocean brings,
And ofttimes ponder'd over ancient tales
The seaman dreams of as he westward sails.

"'There be a world,' a mariner at sea
Once utter'd wild with mystic ecstasy,
'There be a world, as sure as in my breast
There be a soul—a world is in the West;
I see the man who shall those regions tread,
The stars decreed; I have it from the dead!'
Thus once at nightfall as our gaze we sent
Where down the sun descends from Heaven's tent,
A snow-white sailor, who the Ocean's wave
And wrathful gales four score of years did brave,

Exclaimed prophetic, and our eyes did meet Ere he expired, sinking at my feet; And ever since that hour I with his eyes Behold a world beneath the Western skies, And deem it inspiration from above, A sacred message we should heed and love: And ever since vague rumor told of one, Who for such emprise help sought at the Throne I waited, hopeful of the given sign, To be an agent in a plan divine; And here ye see me face to face with him In kinship allied by a mutual dream.— What I of wealth possess I risk it, friend; Thine be my caravel, at thy command I put myself and this experienced hand; I wield her helm and wield I shall it still, And others of my kindred shall fulfill Thy weighty emprise, further'd by my will, While we attempt to answer in a trice What since hoar ages puzzled fool and wise. Who doubts may waver, I from doubt am far; I risk my all, the prize is half a star."

As they of Modin fill'd with sacred fire
In counsel bow'd before a priestly sire,
Whose word was law to them who, five in all,
Their faith sustaining, caused a tyrant's fall,
When Hellas trembled, Syria prostrate lay
In that unmatched Asmonean affray,
So here the few weigh things which made the State

Consider long and longer hesitate,
And wonder much, that Spain's reputed wise
Could for a moment cheek the enterprise;
Then speedy action urge upon the host,
The priestly Perez, whom they honor most.
And, as if his the will was of the Throne,
His wisdom question, what should next be done.

And he, as father whose fond eye betrays
An immost gladness on a beaming face,
While younger heads, obeisant to his nod,
His will consult, as the it came of God,
Prepared to test devotion by the deed,
To challenge risk, to hazard life and bleed,
Approving smiles, then, thoughtful in suspense,
He muses deep before he utterance
Imparts to plans he weighing rolls in mind,
As one who ponders over means to find.
The swarthy mariners, a daring band,
In heart clated, touch each other's hand,
As comrades wedded to a sacred task,
While Perez speaks, thus granting what they ask.

"What we have done," he said with earnest eye, "What we shall do on earth will never die, For in my heart prophetic voices say, That deathless we, immortal this our day. The Queen knows me, her minister for years, I heard her shrive, saw often flow her tears. And what I write, I doubt not, she will read,

Take note of all and my suggestion heed;
As for the rest may Heaven our footsteps lead!
Meanwhile, O Friend! until the message come,
Thyself and child find here a hearty home.
Much more of thee we get than we can give
Thy presence here we as a boon receive,
And shall our leisure use to ripen things
Before our messenger good tidings brings;
Our messenger, Rodriguez, thou shalt be
With any one to bear thee company;
Our Monarchs siege to fair Granada lay,
Where armies meet in terrible array
And King and Queen behold the deathful fray.

"Thither proceed, while we confiding wait
To help the Quest before it be too late,
And add new lustre to our Church and State.
And these our friends will come to share with us
A pleasant talk, a ramble, and a glass,
Thus helping us our idle hours to pass."

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

Granada, beleaguered by the armies of Spain, is in great distress. The Christian host is provoked by an insult offered to their Queen. A great display of martial defiance. A move of the Spanish divisions and a countermove of the Moslem army headed by Muza and incited by him to desperate resistance. Spain's Monarchs take a glance at the besieged city. Another challenge of Yarfe is answered by Garcillasso in a duel. Yarfe's death becomes the signal of a general battle. Ponce De Leon and Muza. The issue of the combat is watched by the Moorish King and Court from the towers of the Alhambra. Abdallah's view of the hopeless situation reprimanded by his mother, the Sultana. Her charges are refuted by his youthful Queen, Morayma. The tide of battle turns in favor of Spain. The Moors fly for life in spite of Muza's efforts to rally them and repel the enemy. The dismal night that follows is broken by a conflagration in the Christian camp. Why Granada took no advantage of the accident. The combat is renewed the next day. Muza in the field with the Moorish King, whom he extricates from danger. The Moors are defeated and their King is wounded. They seek safety behind the forts of Granada. The Sultana and Morayma dress the wounds of Boabdil, who deplores his own lot less than the dark prospects of his wife, the Queen. The great grief of the Moslem Court. The royal minstrels are called in to console their Majesties. How they offer consolation. speaks reproachfully to the remnant of the army at the musterplace of Vivarrambla, and orders the gates of Granada to be henceforth locked and barred.

Who thee beheld, Granada wrapt in gloom, Imperial city, else in fairy bloom, Now Desolation frowning at thy gate, Unfriended, widowed, and disconsolate, Of Zion thought, when Vespasian and son
The Seat invaded of the Only One,
His sacred fane to pillage gave and flame,
His faithful slew, their daughters gave to Shame.
Less holy thou, yet pitiful to see
The foeman's iron grasp encompass thee;
Thy mourning battlements and towers bend,
The Eden round thee, what a dreary land!
As if Gomorrah's guilt had brought on thee
Just Heaven's Vengeance, dire Calamity.

Say, Clio, how in her last hour she stood The bitter trials of her solitude. When, after woes untold, she had to face A grim beleaguerer too poor in grace To let her breathe her last heroic breath, Instead of dying an inglorious death. Ungenerous foe, who sent his Gothic swarm To burn and ravage orchard, crop and farm, Till, of all beauty rifled, pale Distress Disfigured her, else queen of Loyeliness. In vain her leaders her brave sons inspire. In vain her cannon belch forth death and fire, In vain her legions chafe for the affray; Gaunt Hunger threatens her with slow decay. While her inexorable foes beguile Their quiet hours with feasts in pompous style, And still in heaps their new provisions pile. But other notes than Joy's unbridled glee. Than damsel laughter, luscious Minstrelsy,

Shall soon the Vega's treacherous joyance break When furious War shall earth and heaven shake.

What means that pageant's menacing array,
Dense squadrons moving with the rising day
To martial music from the Spanish camp,
The Vega ringing with the warrior's tramp?
That morn Granada, wounded to her core,
With imprecations from a sacred door
A hateful symbol in delirium tore,
Which in revenge bold Pulgar with his sword
Affixed, defying one who with base word
A weapon hurled toward the royal tent,
The legend on "This for your Queen is meant."
Whereat Hispania's boldest chose his men,
At night broke way into the tiger's den,
And thus amazed the vengeful Saracen.

The trumpet's call Granada hears and sends
Her valiant sons whom Muza's word commands;
Divisions marshall'd hurriedly proceed
To check the foe who forward moves with speed;
At Vivarrambla seven legions wait
The Chief's command to march beyond the gate;
Chivalrous horsemen on their fiery steeds,
The noblest species wild Arabia breeds,
Make up the squadron whom that Marshal leads.
Them next a mass of steel-clad horsemen stand
With lance and buckler and Damascus brand;
Reserve battalions make a massive rear

Of arquebuse, cross-bow, scimetar and spear, While forty thousand elsewhere waiting glow, Eyes full of ardor, eager for the foe. The Chief comes bounding on his noble horse, His eagle-eye surveys the bristling force That moves like waves, responsive to his will; He bids them listen and the host is still:

"Shall I frame words, ye valiant Moors, to tear New-bleeding wounds and conjure up Despair, Or shall I old and new reverses link, That we of Malaga and Baza think, And other cities famous years ago, Now laid in ruins, famous thro' their woe: Then ask ye, shall our dear Granada fall, A kingdom vanish, banner, name and all; Sink undefended, hunger-stricken we With such an army, such a chivalry? Ay, rather War than Plague and Famine brave, Fight we and fall, make not these walls our grave, Nor sigh like women, as if Manhood fled From Moslem bosom, buried with a dead Heroic ancestry whom Taric led, When prostrate Spain, as chaff before the wind, Sought refuge northward, leaving Spain behind. Why dare they now the lion in his lair Beard thus unpunished, thus their will declare, Our honor trample, slight our knightly sense, Our valor scorn with Christian insolence?— Unanswered we, who challenge them to meet

Us breast to breast for triumph or defeat. Why shun they battle if it be no fear Of tested daring for a foothold dear. Which, peradventure, should our armies meet. The Xenil made another Guadalete, Where sires of our blood did strike that blow Which laid Iberia's host and monarch low?— O, what a change, by Allah's great decree, Do we behold, heirs of that ancestry! Malaga fallen, our fairest cities down Once jewel'd beauties of Granada's crown, Uncounted warriors still unburied lie. Here Plague and Hunger, there Despondency; Granada's garland foes in aslies lay, A waste to-day, an Eden yesterday, She weeping, as Niobe all alone, Her prince a hostage, Weakness on her Throne! Yet grand in ruins, formidable she, Her bravest sons in warlike panoply Are prompt to do her bidding in distress, As lions rise when roars the lioness; Five myriad blades unsheathe to do her will, She frowns majestic, is Granada still.— The banners raise, move on, Granada prays And Allah smiles, advance, the banners raise!"

As when wild fire, bursting furious free, Invades the hives of crowded Industry, Combustion bursts, the wind upspringing sends His howling rage to sweep the elements,

Till earth and heavens glow and masses roll Of air and flame and steam beyond control, So here the Arabs Muza's fire catch And burning march to battle with dispatch; Behind them blessings ring, and tears are shed For those who go to sink among the dead; Without they muster and confront the foe, A threatening power thirsting for the blow; But unperturbed Spain no challenge stirs, To break the King's command no Spaniard dares; For not for combat are those colors gay Of warlike pageantry in stern display, Tho' lombards clatter and battalions move, Of mail a fortress and of steel a grove. Alhambra's graces nearer to survey The Queen had wish; therefore that vast array, That slow toward Zubia winds on hilly ground, There station takes, divisions close around; On rock and terrace serried ranks present An iron wall to guard the royal tent. Grandees hold watch, while both the Rulers gaze With eager eye on the enormous maze Of Nature's luxuries and human art Outspread before them as a painted chart, Glories that bleak environments enhance, A magic scene to ravish every sense. "That paradise, my Queen, those forts enshrine, Will be ere long our seat, it shall be thine, A worthy sojourn for a noble Queen, A prize well worthy of a king to win."

The Monarch utters in a soften'd tone,
And kisses tenderly his dearest one,
Who softly answers in an equal strain:
"Without the Lord the monarchs plan in vain."

But lo! uproarious tumult you below Of Moslem throngs, who from the gateway flow And issue still with laughter coarse and loud Amid them, like Goliath, vain and proud A giant figure, as the from his grave That Philistine arose on horse to brave Not Israel but Spain, who sees aghast A holy symbol trampled in the dust. Yarfe his name, whose hand that message flung, Meant for the Queen; he in his saddle swung Encasèd in impenetrable mail, With "Ava Maria" at his horse's tail,— The trophy Pulgar to the mosque did nail. As when a forest echoing the sound Of rumbling thunder growling underground; Or as the waves recoiling from the shore, Repelled leap and leaping fume and roar, So rung the outburst of the holy ire That set the warrior and the priest on fire, And thousands yow'd to take a vengeance dire. Chivalrous heads ask Ponce de Leon's leave To bring outrageous Blasphemy to grief, But he, unmatched knight, the Queen gave word That day to shed no blood, nor draw a sword. "I would to Heaven bold Pulgar were not far

To chastise lustily that Moslem cur,
He having right the trophy to regain,
He more this once than any one of Spain."
The Marquis said, when one among the throng,
A hardy chevalier, to stirrup sprung,
And, like the wind, off Garcilasso sped
To beg the Sovereign, that, in Pulgar's stead,
He may redeem a knight's implicit pledge
To honor Virtue, chastise Sacrilege.
And "Grant, O Sire," the King hears him implore,
"That I avenge the Virgin we adore,
And Yarfe's bosom with this weapon rend,
Grant me this duty for an absent friend."

Permission given, up the warrior leaps And, as a torrent, down the hill he sweeps, Nor stops ere him he beards who, mounted, rears A massive head, the heaviest of spears, And looks, one mass of steel from head to toe, With downright scorn upon a smaller foe. "Thou art the dog," the braggart Moor began "Whose hand unclean profaned great Allah's fane, That patch affixing with a harlot's name To make us worship thus thy holy dame? And thinkest thou with that unseemly rod To save the mother of thy saving god? Speak out, or wind I from thy snout will squeeze, Speak, bark, or cackle as one of the geese.— What, mute or deaf? art thou the devil's mate? Perchance a fool—ha, let me feel thy pate."

No answer came, instead of which a thrust Lights on the Moslem like a furious blast, And is returned by a whelming blow Which does the Spaniard headlong backward throw; Another rush, and then a whirling shock No change effected, but the lances broke, When his Damascus blade the Moor did wield, His Garcilasso, grappling shield to shield. As when in Judah's Valley Jesse's son In combat met that pagan champion, Two armies waited for the duel's turn In heavy silence with intense concern, So Expectation here tied every tongue, The Goth and Moor were waiting throng on throng, Anxiety was visible on each face, Each eyeball centred on the interspace Where doubt was hovering over them who bled: Who would survive? whose lot fell with the dead? A fall, a shrick—the steeds are running free, The Christian lies beneath the Moslem's knee; Hispania prays for her devoted son, Granada cheers, one of her foes is gone; But horror, lo! to her intense dismay There Yarfe sinks in a mysterious way.— He reels, he falls by Garcilasso's steel That struck his heart as he on him did kneel. Rejoicing Spain her champion sees return, The trophy on his sword, his praise to learn; Divisions hail him, and some voices ring: "The Virgin saved him, lead him to the King!"

Hot runs the Arab's blood whose curses fly In vollies coarse against the enemy; Impatient-mad, in accent gruff and stern, Demanding battle all to Muza turn; He, lithe as tiger, rage in mien and eye, As tiger thirsting for a tempting prey, A steed bestriding which appears to feel Its warlike master's death-disdaining zeal, As arrow swift, careers from end to end; His call inflames them as a firebrand. "Give battle, Moors, strike out in desperate mood For wife and child, let not the chance elude; Beat off the wolves from this our last retreat, To break free way our cavalry is fleet; Our cannon speak, hold our reserves for speed, We strike at once and make the Christian bleed, Who yonder gathered, thence with greedy eye Into Alhambra's sanctuaries to pry; I lead my squadron, high our ensigns wave, The Goth no master be, the Moor no slave! Come roll and swallow, like a hungry sea, For home and mosque—choose Death or Liberty."

Now, as a cyclone with prodigious might Uptears a city in its sweeping flight, When houses leap, as if of cardboard cut And millstones fly as bombs from mortar shot, While fire, dust and wrecks the air convulse, The heart throbs faster with great Nature's pulse, So fiercely rushing with earth-shaking tramp.

The Moors fall madly on the Gothic camp, And lance, and scimetar, and deadly shell Make fatal havor of the infidel; The vanguard sink beneath the lancer's blow, The ranks divide, Confusion scares the foe. Chief Ponce de Leon, terrible in war, Frowns red and wrathful as a meteor, Since files of his division yielding bend, Who orders battle under his command.— Four Gothic chiefs their dense battalions lead, The cannon thunder, leaps and neighs the steed; Close war the masses, banners rise and fall, Reserves rush onward to the trumpet's call: In haste Granada hurries out her swarms, To man her ramparts age is under arms. A forest whelmed by tempestuous blasts A fleet dismantled of her gear and masts, By frenzied furies in collision riven, Uphurled, shivered, tossed, swept and driven, Could scarce a notion to your mind convey Of that ensanguined, bloodthirsty fray.

Two Counts, de Cabra and Tendilla, first Naim Reduan and Aben Zayde breast; These straight the onslaught with defeat repel, Their legions raving like a brood of hell. Next Don Alonzo with blood-reeking brand Cuts way for self and his impetuous band, While Ponce de Leon, terror of the war, Has full a task to braye the brayest Moor Whose knights strike hard wherever he inspires
The dashing squadron that he leads and fires.
"No quarter, Arabs, no!" he thunders wild,
"For home ye battle, Moors, for wife and child.—
Who cares to live to faithless thralls a slave;
No choice is left, a kingdom or a grave!
Great Allah smiles on Moslems who defy
Unfaithful foes, the battle gain or die!"

As oil on fire cast the flame makes rage,
As ravenous monsters breaking thro' the cage
With blood and slaughter mark their fatal trace,
Slay all they strike and for new victims race,
So Muza's battle-cry: "Die or be free!"
To feats of madness drives his chivalry,
Who, like an avalanche, bear down the foe,
Cleave head and body with the saber's blow.

New thunders burst, Granada backs her sons,
Her cannon rattle, bombs come forth in tons;
Dust, smoke and sulphur spread a cloud of gloom,
Confusion bellows as on the Day of Doom.
From Zubia's height down Count Ureña quick
His legion throws into the battle's thick.
Alarmed, both the Sovereigns now survey
The battle-field and kneel for help to pray;
For doubtful sways the fortune of the hour;
This battle lost, and vanish'd is the flower
Of all the triumphs won in eight campaigns;
And what a loss for the united Spains!

Fair Moslem dames Alhambra's towers crowd;
They watch the combat hidden in a shroud
Impenetrable to the distant gaze,
Of noise a bedlam, and of troops a maze.
In silken luxury embower'd high,
From sunbeam screened, screen'd from vulgar eye,
Ill-starred Abdallah, Ruler but in name,
His Queen, Morayma, and that virtuous dame,
Ayxa la Hora, known to Grief and Fame,
In speechless tension the great battle see
Which seems a chaos from their balcony.
Here, as in reverie, with a steady eye
The King begins, preluded by a sigh:

"What tho' our arms might some advantage win, It would the end's beginning but begin; Like him who Death resisting effort makes To gasp for air, then sinks and never wakes, So I, as tainted wether, Allah's Will The Fates appearing, falling shall fulfill; Since come it must let thus the sea devour This islet too, and let the stars not lower. May El Zogoybi's dust, so long the curse Of loyal hearts, auspicious winds disperse. A father's terror and a mother's woe, Unwilling creature of a ruthless foe, Shame's target thus dishonor'd unavenged, Delightful regions into a desert changed, Sum up a life, which thro' thy care, O, Queen, Thro' mother's love the Fates were pleased to spin.

"O, hadst thou but relax'd thy watchful care When Aben Hassan's executioner The tower of Cimares sought to free My sire's Kingdom from Calamity! When thou, Sultana, by a rope of shawls Didst place thy child beyond those deadly walls, Contriving thus to make me King and great, Unhappy mother, for a cruel fate! For vain are Courage, Valor, Strife and Hope Against ill-omens of the horoscope; Great Aben Alman's lineage ends with me, The santon raves, such be my destiny. Had I to front an unpredestined war, Castilian foemen thick from shore to shore, I should my mettle test, doing my part, From sires springing of heroic heart; But strive who may when host encounters host And, lost or won, the Fates cry: 'All is lost.' Thus to the dregs of Sorrow's cup I drink, Abysses vawn, the Fates command me sink; I shut mine eyes to fall into the deep But shrink in pain; I hear my dear ones weep.— Sweet Queen, Morayma, love angelic thine, In soul and body thou, a gift divine, Than houri sweeter thou, my wedded mate, To soothe the sores struck by a flinty Fate. Ah! thee dethroned to see I cannot stand, No more the queenly lady of the land, No more Alhambra's grace, but, Allah knows, What sojourn thine, what miseries and woes!

I shudder, dearest, shudder when I think Of thee and thine, who with Granada sink; Thy father fell, a glorious death he died, But me great Allah such an end denied: How often did I Death stare in the face, Yet am alive, alive to my disgrace!"

"Unkingly King!" la Hora bitter cries,
"Who, unresisting, dost accuse the skies
For overthrow Inaction brings on thee
To verify the santon's prophecy,
As if a king, ordain'd to fall by Fate,
Could not as monarch war, could not fall great.
Ay me! thy mother were it meet for her
To follow thee with spear or scimetar,
No brand she feared save the brand of Shame,
Effeminate Slavery and a craven's name.
Could I great Allah's blessèd favor win,
Instead of thee I bore a Saladin,
A valiant King unbending, bold and free,
In rain or sunshine clad with majesty.

"As gold by fire cleansed is of dross,
High-mettled spirits brighter shine in loss,
For, come of God, invulnerable the soul;
But passing things the sullen Fates control,
They live forever who as warriors fall,
Like him at Ohod slain, Mohammed's kin,
Brave Hamza fallen in that battle's din,
Distorted, mangled under the Prophet's eyes,

Proclaimed God's lion in the blissful skies, A lion here, a prince in Paradise.— Let woman weep, thou rise to fill thy post, As Moslem strive, be king till all is lost. Ah, weakness thine, who never durst dispute A rightful heirdom kingly resolute; Thou, fond of ease, didst with thy foe compact To chop the boughs but leave the stem intact; And now the stem, as oak by lightning cleft, A singed mass of leaf and twig bereft, Waits for the axe to sink upon the heath,— Such is Granada in her throes of death. Her thousand towers shake, her glory fades, Thy patron friend her battlements invades; You loval files her wounded bosom shield, They sword and lance with manly provess wield, But thou, Abdallah, art not in the field."

"Why ope, Sultana," Morayma interferes,
Her speech impeded by a rush of tears,
"Unhealing wounds, why present gloom increase
By hard reproach, impending miseries?
Abdallah fought, his armors bear the scars,
To hold his throne despite of Fate and stars,
But vain is Valor, Allah's seal'd decree
Azraïl bears to frustrate Gallantry.
My glorious father, Andalusia's dread,
With hundred years and triumphs on his head,
A warrior born great warriors to appal,
Immortal Atar, met his death withal,

His grave the torrent of a rushing brook;
No quarter giving, he no mercy took;
He of Abdallah's prowess highly thought,
Who at his side the adversary smote,
His craven legions thrice to action drove,
For throne and faith as king and Moslem strove.

"Twice, sword in hand, the false usurper he In open combat braved impetuously, And El Zagal, else desperate in deed, Or had to fly or in the duel bleed. What ruler may our King as monarch dared, Who all privation and all hardship shared The soldier stood, and Death met face to face, Saw Valor's trophies oft his triumphs grace; Or strove till wounds disabled limb and brain, Resolved to die or fair the battle gain. Unlike fierce Kaled, like Obeidah he Relies on Honor, trusts in Honesty.—

"But who on earth may stem the Ocean's roll? Who conquer Fate, who Allah's Will control? When to Destruction Taric gave his fleet And wove his plan a mighty foe to beat, He visions had, the Prophet saw in dream, The stars and Fate did in his favor seem; Grandees conspired to betray their land, The Caliph's host struck like one giant's hand; We strive divided, Treason barefaced grins; Thro' Moslem treason Christian valor wins."

Abdallah hears not his Morayma's plea, He sees his army from the combat flee, Discerning soon his flying infantry; They, as a surge rebounding from the reef. Now scatter fast, deaf to the rallying Chief. Whose thirst for gore the Spaniard hath to feel, And Gothic blood is reeking from his steel; Him naught can stay, his knights are close at hand, Whole ranks they stagger, scores to death they send, But, overwhelm'd, their footmen flying wild, They slowly yield, but not ere heaps are piled Of dead and dying, mangled, mingling low, Unheeded, trampled, gored by friend and foe. Dispersed, as goats before the wolf's glare eye, The panic-stricken Moslems madly fly And, stabbed backward, hundreds of them die, His game the Goth hunts to Granada's gate, Brave Muza chides thus unresigned to Fate: "A curse on Cowardice, unmanly brave, In boast a hero and in heart a slave; Degenerate Arabs, sired by a breed Of nerve and spirit as Arabia's steed, Who would poltroons like those believe to be The lineal heirs of such an ancestry!"

With trophies laden Spain's combatants return To claim their prize, the Sovereigns' praise to learn, But, seeing comrades dead at every turn, They unrejoicing toward the camp proceed, The Chiefs their troops, the host the Monarchs lead, While wrapt in grief Granada's daughters weep For dear ones fallen, unsooth'd by Hope or Sleep. Thus ever, since the brute in man is strong, One's lamentation is the other's song.—
Ah, it is well, that cycles long dilute
The hellish doings of that monstrous brute
Who, sprung from Chaos with a dream of light,
In evil revels as the fiend of night;
For, summed up, this world of Sin and Guilt,
Of legal carnage, blood Religion spilt,
Of murdered Innocence and martyr's tears,
A sea of crime, woes of six thousand years,
Infernal madness, frenzies nothing quells,
Would mock the torments of a hundred hells.

Thus red with blood, as countless times before,
The sun descends, a day of death and gore,
And star-eyed Night the deadly broil suspends,
And peace, mock-peace, upon the hosts descends.
Unrestful squadrons on their weapons sleep,
Redoubled guards a watchful sentry keep,
Who shudder at the growls the beast of prey
Emits where uninterr'd the slaughter'd lay;
The cadence soft the nightingale doth pour
Ill-fits environments of bloody war.—
But lo! Night's sable sunders and a flare
A glimmer follows, bursting in a glare
Of wind-engendering flame that swells and grows,
And startled Spain into confusion throws.
A camp on fire seething like a sea

Of glowing waves towards Heaven's canopy. From battlement and turret in surprise Granada sees the lurid blazes rise. Herself illumined by the raging streams Of whirling flames, and from afar it seems As the the army of the infidel Were in the furnace of a bursting hell; For where at sunset proud escutcheons gleamed, A hundred banners to the westward streamed, Of tents a city marvelous to behold The Sovereigns' standard guarding did enfold, In dead of night Combustion, glowing red, Consuming, like a deluge, vastly spread, The flames the winds, the winds the fires fed. As when the golden city Belus swayed From sleep aroused, stupefied, dismayed, Beheld her glories in an instant fade, But with no foe, who there in ashes laid Home, fane and palace, and the inmate slew, Spain rose aghast her ruined camp to view; Her squadrons gather, shrill her trumpets blow— Was all Mischance, was there a treacherous foe? But reassured, the precious things are lost, She rues the accidental holocaust, A holocaust the Monarchs with a sigh Now see expire, and the embers die.— And vigilant Granada, why so slow To seize that moment for a hardy blow, When one success thy losses might retrieve, The grim besieger break, thy woes relieve?

Suspicion made her chary of the game,
There might be treason lurking in the flame
Her last defenders cunning to ensnare:
Thus foolish-wise she would no sally dare,
Sparing her legions for the last affray
That shall distract her on the dawning day.
For scarce was dawn discernible in the skies
When she beheld a host from ashes rise,
As phænix new and eager for the fight,
Prepared the vestige of her groves to blight,
The only remnant saved by stout defense
Of all her wither'd sweet exuberance.

The sentry's call Granada's slumber breaks,
The King is up, his loyal army wakes;
He sallies forward with a dashing rush,
Him Muza seconds and the armies clash
With dreadful fury, as the beach and wave
When tempests rage, more desperate than brave.
The Moslem, threshold, wife and child in sight,
As frenzied leopard strives with main and might,
The stab disdaining till his spirits fly,
His curses burling at the enemy.

Abdallah leads in feats his kingly train,
Never a king, since Roderick was slain,
Struck mightier blows, nor could more Death defy
Than on that morn his Moorish Majesty,
While, as a flash, upon his noblest horse
With lightning's speed dread Muza cuts his course

Thro' thick and thin, across confounding cries, Ubiquitous where vantage ground he spies, The Goth affrighting with a voice that thrills The Arab's bosom, and the Spaniard's chills. "No slave the Moslem, happy he who dies For Allah's glory, bliss of Paradise; Granada save, your mothers there and wives, We freedom buy or honor for our lives!"

And as this voice above the tumult sounds. Throughout a score of broken battle grounds, Its ring, as vitriol on fire cast,
The Arab's fury turns into a blast;
He slays while slain and multiplies the dead,
Demoniac Madness rules in Valor's stead;
The masses rage, the leaders lose control
Resistless yielding to the battle's roll.
Granada's roofs and towers cannot hold
The dames and maidens and the hapless old,
Who trembling water the issue of the day
And for their combatants to Allah pray.

But vain is Prowess, Prayer, all is vain, Islam, once more defeated, yields to Spain; This foothold lost, it shall not rule again, But vegetate, an object of disdain.

Insidious sure, the showing gap on gap, The veteran Goths the Moor's foundation sap, And, the the Moslem as a calcar glows, Succumb he must to his superior foes,

Who onward press with overpowering sway
And soon retrieve the losses of the day.
As from Samaria's plain the Syrian fled
By terrors haunted which his fancy bred,
He, fleeing shades, a gorgeous camp and gear
Deserted madly in unfounded fear,
His armor losing in his fleet career,
So all at once, with dangling sword and shield,
Great Moslem throngs are flying from the field
And others follow, follow'd by the cry
Of chasing victors, crying: "Victory!"

Swift Muza like a shooting star careers
Adjures the dastards to allay their fears,
With curses loads them who would give no ear,
Then toward Abdallah bends his quick career
To help the King who, hemmed in, repels
With fifty lances thousand infidels,
But slowly wavers with reluctant gall;
Seeing the outcome, he prefers to fall,
When dashing Muza with his lancers fleet
For King and self secures a safe retreat,
With all an army hanging at their heels,
Till cheek'd by thunder, which the cannon peals.

The King dejected toward Alhambra speeds, Unhurtful wounded from three wounds he bleeds; La Hora meets him with a word of praise, Morayma weeps, discerning in his face The death of Hope, the torments of Despair; And wife and mother with devoted care
To ease discomfort loving minister,
Till sooth'd in mood, the Caliph feels again
That his but half is of Morayma's pain,
Who, had he fallen, she, the gentlest mate,
Perchance enslayed, would face a cruel Fate.

And "O, Morayma!" thus the King began, "Would God we were not, or thou wert a man, Or I a swain and thou my rural grace, Our son an urchin of a rustic face; Then on the river's bank, on brook, in grove In flowery meads I woodd, I sang my love, Sang sonnets mild in undisturbed peace And sent my rhymes upon the fragrant breeze; And thou wouldst, sweetest, blushingly submit To Love's adorer prostrate at thy feet, Our ravish'd souls would feed on kisses sweet, The world forgetting with her myriad lies, Her fancied triumphs, real miseries; Would raise a brood from sin and evil free, Unknown to Fear, Disgrace, Conspiracy, Nor Pomp nor Power Iblys doth bestow On crowned heads to aggravate their woe; But Allah doth blest Humbleness deny To such as He creates to groan and sigh, Thus art thou mine, thine El Zogovbi I, Who, born a king, might yet a beggar die.— Alhambra, ay, Alhambra, thee to leave To whom, as love to love, my feelings cleave,

As love with love, with thee I hate to part, Yet part we must, O, anguish of my heart! Morayma, weepest thou? how happy, dear, Thy gentler sorrow thawing in a tear, Relieves thy heartache, tenderest of mates, My sorrow melts not, frigid as the Fates.

"O, I should weep when, what we now possess,
These fairest gardens, noblest palaces,
Delicious groves, the mosques they ensconce,
With song resounding, sacred orisons,
These treasures dear, and this my rightful Throne
In spirit I forfeited see and gone;
And thee attendant at some lord's repast,
A slave, perhaps, a creature of his lust;
O, happy they who rest among the dead
For Death is kind, compared with such a dread!"

The gray Sultana parted with a frown,
She Manhood valued more than rule and crown;
Unbroken she by all reverses stood,
Sultana ever in her widowhood,
She ever honor'd for her virtues high,
Who, come what might, did neither weep nor sigh
Save when the son by her affection nursed
Unkingly acted, or his birthday cursed
When, short of patience, she his presence left,
As one disconsolate, of child bereft.
Not thine, Morayma, is a mood of strife,
A tender mother thou and loving wife

Of sympathies unbounded utter'd free, Thy love and sorrow deep are as the sea; Yet self-forgetful, Love would rather die Than see the dearest suffer, hear him sigh; Thus not her own distress Morayma heeds, Her heart is bleeding, while Abdallah's bleeds.

As ivy climbing in sylvestrian shades
The clasper tightens when the storm invades
The stem it clings to with its vital strings,
The gale withstands or with the oak-tree sinks,
So in his trials to her lord she clove
With more than consort's, more than mother's love,
And, unconcerned with her woe or weal,
Her sores unheeding, his she tried to heal
By lavishing endearment, soft caress,
Expressions of Love's deepest tenderness;
But vain the witchery! the charm and smile
Impotent proved his anguish to beguile.

What next, poor Queen? whom Love did fail to charm,

Hope not the minstrel will the sting unarm; Ay, song will deepen woe, the tuneful strain At best wakes Grief, is harbinger of pain;

For Sorrow swells as music strikes the ear, Heaves like a mount volcanic fires rear, The eye makes crater of the burning tear, Each fiber shudders, feeling God is near. The chief musician, at the Queen's command,
The trembling strings smote with a master's hand,
You would have thought he smote Apollo's lyre;
The Arab struck it with a soul of fire,
The royal minstrels made response in choir;
A maiden chorus took up each refrain
The gilded domes re-echo'd with the strain.
Stout eunuchs listen'd with wild-glancing eyes,
The minstrels sang of Heaven and Paradise,
Of lakes whose wave the faithful drink in bliss;
Of Allah's Tooba-tree, the houri's kiss;
Of honeyed rivers, brooks of milk and wine;
Of jewel'd robes, which like those angels shine,
Who serve in gold celestial drink and food,
Refulgent maids of saintly virginhood.

This for the blest Elect; nor could frail speech The utmost raptures of the Moslems teach, Who dwell in regions where the musky breeze Diffuses fragrance and seraphic ease, Air, bird and flower are full of harmonies; Where leafage sparkles, like the golden stream, The meadows with ineffable wonders teem.

"Joys none may utter, unutter'd by tongue," Graver the tune flows, and sadder the song, "Great Allah reserveth for Moslems who bleed Their honor defending, the mosque and the creed; They fear not Misfortune who lie on the field The wound in the body, the scar on the shield;

They skyward soar happy to get there their meed,
Immortal by faith and deathless by deed.
Valleys enameled with lilies and roses,
Climbers of Zambak and pathways of mosses,
Silken pavilions the Musselman chooses
With dove-eyed houris of radiant graces,
Whose unfading beauties the Moslem unlaces,
Unsated indulging their softest embraces
With garlands cherubic, which his fair head braces,
The Prophet accords him, who falls for his glory,
Whose lance hath been shattered, whose wounds tell
his story,

Whose armor lies battered, his lips cold and gory, Freed from Temptation and Danger and Worry.

"Gold-winged cherubim do martyrs there homage, Singing and soaring on jewel-studded plumage In gardens of cinnamon, sylvan cool weather, Unmarred by reptile and desert and heather Mid birds paradisical warbling together, Of rapturous melodies, star-dotted feather.

"Limpid bright waters embosomed in flowers,
Forests in blossom, which from leafy towers,
Stirred by Allah's Breath, send down in showers
Life-giving rose-petals on heavenly bowers,
Bowers where santons and warriors are dreaming
Feasted by damsels whose faces are beaming
With black eyes enchanting, and hair that is
streaming,

One smile, one soft rapture a life's grief redeeming. Earth bids man no blessing he can hold forever; From things most endeared at last we must sever; Brave, Moslem, vicissitude manly, however; To gain Allah's Mercy frail mortal endeavor. Tho' loss be heartbreaking to Faith yet be given; When kingdoms are shaking and armies are riven And monarchs are quaking by Destiny driven, No Moslem downbreaking shall lose trust in Heaven."

While thus the minstrels King and Queen console And Resignation flows from eyes of Dole, Bold Muza wheels around the scattered groups On Vivarrambla; gathering like dupes, They blush to face their Chief, who deeply grieves At his desertion by these fugitives, Who, had the hour's rebuff they stood, who knows What change it conjured in Granada's woes.

"We lost the day, we peradventure lost
The last of chances to repel that host
Who wolf-like hangs about Granada's gates,
Our meek surrender eagerly awaits,
Seeing how lamb-like our quick footmen fly,
Well knowing whither, but unknowing why,
Too fond of chains, too womanish to die.
Henceforth no gate unbolted be at night,
Lest, now emboldened by your sheepish flight,
The foe, who hitherto was held in dread
By dauntless Valor, which did glory shed

On our great army and the army's Head,
Affright our watch and, ere a legion wake,
Our portals capture and our city take.
Moors bar your gates and be on the alert,
No angels guard them who their cause desert;
Entrust not safety to the eyeless wall,
Postpone, O Moors! postpone Granada's fall."

Here Muza ends and with a bound withdraws, He honor'd still and dreaded by his foes; His gruff reproaches the sad men benumb; They look dispirited, as deaf and dumb, And soon disperse in unclated mood With self in darkness over things to brood,—Defeated, blamed, the hunger unappeased, The rations dwindling, while the toil increased; Too hard for Moslem even, yet to sigh Impious were, for Allah rules on high, And when He trials sends He knoweth why; Night throws her mantle over scenes of gloom, The day's reverses seal Granada's doom.

BOOK V.

ARGUMENT.

The ravages of an unholy ambition. Spain's camp changed into a massive city in face of Granada, whose misery becomes extreme. Boabdil in consultation with his Court concerning the situation. Abul Cazim, the Wazir of the city, describes the sufferings of the people, and urges surrender without delay. The Grand Vizier, Yusef, agrees with the Wazir, that further resistance was hopeless and dangerous. They are vigorously opposed by Muza, who insists, that another battle might yet turn the tide of fortune in their favor. The impression he makes is effaced by the sudden appearance of a santon, who proclaims the irrevocable doom of Granada. The Wazir is empowered to proceed to Santa Fé and secure the best terms for the capitulation of Granada. Abul Cazim does as he is bidden, meets the Spanish Sovereigns, and returns with the treaty to be signed by Boabdil. The purport of the treaty. Muza's last effort to prevent surrender. Yusef proves the utter hopelessness of a struggle, that would only add horror to wretchedness; it was Allah, who ordained the fall of the Moorish Kingdom in Spain. farewell to his fallen Monarch, who affixes his signature to the treaty, which the Wazir delivers at the Spanish headquarters. How Muza prepares at his house not to survive the surrender of Granada. His encounter with the Gothic guards beyond the gates, and his duel with Ponce de Leon. His wounded charger brings the tidings of his death to the city's portals, whereupon there is general lamentation and sorrow.

Ambition's thirsty Greed, unloved of God,
Progenitor of endless evil here,
Since Cain his brother murder'd dwells in Nod
By spectres haunted, sights of gloom and fear;
Her knitted eyebrows darken home and hearth,
The zest of pleasure mar, the banquet's mirth,

Insatiate whether in a cave of stone, In marble palace, or on golden throne, Incessant Thirst and Hunger parch her soul, She values lightly what she haply won, This world's half being hers, she craves the whole. Sweet Eden's gate celestial sentries bar, Sodom buried in Abaddon's womb, Angels hurled down this nether star, Babel's madness, Korah's living tomb; Noah's deluge, kingdoms in decay, Glories blasted, triumphs laugh'd to scorn, Cæsars fallen, Rome's downtrodden sway, Crowns and sceptres from proud monarchs torn, Loud-warning urge Ambition's Greed to quell, Thro' whom great men and greater angels fell. Beautiful amid refulgent spheres,

Treasure-laden, bath'd in golden tides, Unceasing thro' Infinitude careers

This globe, whose bounties Greed with Might divides; The masses worship Mammon, watch his nod,

The iron hand above the spirit rules, To them a Czar is still a demi-god,

Who like Timour, builds pyramids of skulls; Thoughtless, dreamless thousand millions plod

Until in silence Death the plodders lulls; O, shameful, bitter thus to kiss the rod

Of creatures base; how numberless the fools! Might of Genius, mines of precious ore,

Make giant Industry her sinews ply; Cities, harvests, armies sink in war, Vengeance, vengeance! furning kingdoms cry.
Wasteful horror! blood and treasure flow,
Madness triumphs, Sanity despairs;
Dark as demon, causing dole and woe
Himself with God presumptuous man compares.

Had the nations half the labor spent,
Half the treasures lost in armament,
Given freely Ignorance to chase,
Wisdom teaching, love of righteous deed,
Golden cycles would a happier race
Behold united on this planet's face,
Now divided between Force and Greed,
Pardon, pardon, but make answer, friends,
Answer ye, who fellow-men a home,
A grave deny in pious Christian lands;
Who doom the infant in his mother's womb,
Because of Creed, a vagabond to roam,
Tho' God for all His rain and sunshine sends,
Ay, answer, why did your Messiah come?

Now, where of late the camp in ashes lay,
As the by magic built, a city rose;
The Moor beheld it with intense dismay,
His glory's tembstone founded by his focs
Granada's hope for succor to dispel;
In massive walls and comfort rest the host,
Immovable thus, the lateful infidel;
Alhambra knows, that her domain is lost.
Nine provinces, when Ferdinand declared,

That Gothic rule shall henceforth be supreme, Nor sacrifice of gold nor labor spared

To build that city, risen like a dream,
A bechive now, where Life and Commerce stir,
But mainly plann'd the Moslem to debar
From all provisions, forcing him to yield

His last resort; he, doubtful of success, His best and brayest fallen in the field, Subdued by Hunger, broken by Distress,

The cup of sorrow empties to its dregs.

With Death or Slavery, and no helper near, With haggard myriads, Poverty in rags,

The infant's craving and the mother's tear; With Plague unhindered stalking in the street,

The dead unburied rotting in the lane, Granada's Caliph and his counselors meet,

Consult in sorrow and conclude in pain, That more delay might all the Furies rouse;

The hungry masses, who for vengeance yearn,
Might street and square into a graveyard turn,
Alhambra's Court into a charnel house.

In royal garb exalted Boabdil,

His leading counselors scated at his Throne,
Tho' much dejected he, a ruler still,

Thus opes the Council in an earnest tone:

"Gray-headed sages, bearded warriors brave, Give counsel, Moors, what shall our measures be In this extremest hour of trials grave, When Hope recedes from grim Calamity,
And prospects wither of relief without,
While thickening darkness hovers round our head;
What shall be done, ye wisest and devout,
Have strength we yet to stand, say, have ye bread?
Ah! Fate insists, we shall this Kingdom see
Go down with us, our santons prophesied,
Great Allah destined us His lamb to be,
A victim of His anger, else we died
A happier soul unknown, uncurs'd untried,

Insensible as clod, unpress'd as air,

As water, wind or plant or brute or naught;
But live we must in anguish and despair,

This after battles we have kingly fought, To be a people's curse, pass days of dread,

Long nights of spectral dreams, or sleepless care, The pauper envy, deem happiest the dead.

"Yet what of this, our sorrow light appears
In balance weigh'd with sorrows measureless
Of our good nation groaming in distress,
In slaughter wading thus for many years,
One loss another drawing in its train,
Uncheck'd the earnage and undried the tears.
Who dares a power battling thus disdain,
Who, as a forest singed by a flame,
Or as an oak-tree lightning split in twain,
Stood long in glory and now bends in fame?
And must we bend? O, let us yet prolong
Our lease of greatness, be it for a day;

Once lost, Alhambra might be famed in song
But, fallen once, forever falls our sway.

Speak wisdom, Wazir, who our city knows,
How long, indulging Hope, may we endure
The foeman's pressure, which resistless grows,
How long withstand the Goth, within secure?

And each and all before us grave and wise,
The Wazir following, may give advice."

The Wazir, Abul Cazim, deeply sighs, His tidings fall as dirges on the ear: "Hope fled, O Sultan!" bowing he replies, "No hope, no bread, we must surrender, Sire, For hundreds perish and no help is near; Too high the price we every hour must pay For hopeless rule, scarce worthy of the name, Gaunt Hunger, Pestilence our people slay, To yield to Allah, Monarch, is no shame. Our fallen heroes make our story great, As Troy of yore our Kingdom held its ground; Like men we stood, like men we yield to Fate, No realm for aye lasts on this planet's round. Nor thine the fault, O, King, nor thine the guilt, That Islam's triumphs in our days decrease, That Moslem blood is for no purpose spilt And Moslem rule with us, belike, will cease; Fate plays with kingdoms as with waves the wind, As waves unsteady nations rise and sink, Man's greatness centres in his heart and mind, In deeds of soul he dying leaves behind.

Not once Mohammed did from danger shrink, Not even when a world of foes to face He unbefriended strove, prepared to die With none to help him but Almighty's Grace, Disdaining Death in combat for the sky.

"I had a daughter sweeter than the dove,
Than May in blossom, courted by our best;
She, slow in giving maiden love for love,

A youth made happy by her favors blest; He wood and won her in my shady grove,

A charming bride, of brides the loveliest. Their home was Eden, angels came to life,

The years pass'd by they met as lovers meet. As oft as he returned from the strife

To lay his laurels at his consort's feet.

Ah! once he came not as the evening came,

My daughter waited with suspended breath; They brought him cold, it was his day of fame,

A praising army rang the hero's name,

My daughter fell on him—to share his death. Three babes survived, my comfort and my care,—

My anguish whelmed me, I could not weep—
Those nights of sorrow whiten'd my gray hair,

The babes, all three, went with their dame to sleep;

And I am yearning, sighing all alone,

It is so hard uncherish'd thus to stay

In olden days when other joys are gone
And none be there Affection's debt to pay.—
I am consoled; unburt in faith I know,

That Fortune's sunbeam draws the thunder's blast, Which strikes and fells the pines that highest grow And sends the cyclone roaring thro' the vast; The valleys shudder when the mountains shake, A happy worm I should in dust not crawl; They break in triumph, who with grandeur break, Thy fall, O Caliph, is a nation's fall."

As one ashore whose only vessel strands,

That bears the fruitage of a toilsome life,

Expects Disaster with close-folded hands,

Of helpless parents thinking, child and wife,

So Boabdil in speechless anguish sate,

A clouded brow his inward strife betrayed

When Yusef spoke, High Chancellor of the State

And thus advising his grave utterance weighed.

"Man's folly towers as the boldest peak,
Meseems the wisest may be thought a fool.
Who Allah questions, he of vision weak,
Too blind to see the limits of his rule,
Before he dares in face of Him to speak
Who made this earth and all the stars a tool
Inscrutable ends in Cosmos to attain;
Folly may judge this life by joy or dole,
Or weigh its purport by such loss or gain
As quicken feeling, waking glee or pain,
But Wisdom fathoms things to see the whole,
Discerning Providence in every change,
In crumbling empire as in law of clime,

Since His the atom as the mountain range; Like flowers, the forests wither in their time, Mature the fruit drops seeding on the turf; The breeze that waves the dreaming infant's lock, As gale it heaves great Ocean's leaping surf, Which smites the shore and shakes the massive rock, Worlds yield to Allah, stars not less than we, Why grumble thus? rose we not once to fall? We rose in triumph when He bade us be, We bend to pass, obedient to His call. Down goes the ship, the lifeboat seize and save The drowning wretches from a sinking deck, Let them who may strive for an honor'd grave, Nor babe nor mother perish in the wreck. As death the end is of all being here, So Might and Rule abide not where they stay, Predestined, nations run their short career, Ordained to do a thing and pass away. As daybreak welcome, welcome is the night To him who strove, arising with the sun; We rose victorious, did our battles fight, Fate bids submission and our task is done.— Submit, O Caliph, Allah Himself commands To spare His faithful where resistance fails, Like Death the foe inexorable stands, Granada's dame her infant's food curtails: The hours are precious, days wear slow as years When Plague and Famine stare one in the eye. Enough had we of bloodshed and of tears, Or we surrender or self-murder'd die,"

Unanswered Yusef stands; the King is sad;
A while no voice is heard, tho' all know well
That with the army's fall Granada fell;
Yea, all save one, who bold and vengeance-mad,
Unshrinking from Despair new vigor draws,
A man who feels he lives but for a cause;
He dreadful in the field, the bravest head,
A Moslem fearless in the tiger's jaws,
Muza protesting speaks: it were too rash
To take the yoke so hateful to his heart,
Before once more in wrath the armies clash
Or freedom gain or worthless life depart.

"Too hasty counsel this, O Sultan, bide Yet irresolved a while; too rash to bend To cringe unmanly with revolting pride, Crave Bondage with twelve myriads to defend Their last resort and write a tale in gore. Our honors wash in streams of Christian blood, Break thro' their squadrons frantic as a flood That mocks the barriers of a rocky shore, And, come what may, be great forevermore. What may not Valor do, unchained Despair? What not a desperate, embitter'd host, Who, mad as hurricane, their utmost dare For Glory striking, should all else be lost? The moment calls for hardy action, King; Let no disaster Moslem hearts unman, Yet one more sacrifice we Freedom bring. Persist we faithful for persist we can;

Call forth the shades of sires bright in fame, And fall like them, the face against the foe, For Honor strive, for an illustrious name, That with the ages will yet brighter grow. To-day, to-morrow Death fells each in turn, Disdain the chance to choose the warrior's course, To meet the Goth with opposition stern And he ere long will on your necks enforce The yoke of Slavery, chains that clink and burn, The bondsman make his misery discourse, The nobler nature for his coffin yearn. Give up Granada, Sultan, bend, ye wise, The Christian victor might perchance reward Submission tender'd to a world's surprise, With hundred thousand to wield lance and sword. This breast and arm—great Allah hear me swear!— This Moslem heart to Faith and Freedom given; These limbs of mine no tyrant's chain shall bear, Not Muza, no, unless to madness driven, Not I will bend, I solemnly declare Before the Goth, I swear by Him in heaven! How such a kingdom fell with such a host The times shall wonder and the problem solve, A pregnant warning; yea, our leaders lost The spirit's will, the fire of resolve.— Granada's fall I read in every eve, Granada, fairest, thou on bended knee! I see the manhood of a nation die, A people's downfall I untimely see.—

Go, Wazir, hand the Moslem's golden key,

The Christian hand it—it is cheap to sigh;
Surrender, Moors, surrender, I am free;
I shall in nothing with the foe comply,
No Christian lordling forg'd a chain for me."

Thus warlike Muza ends and steps apart, The Council disconcerted hold their seats. Each word he utters sinks into the heart, Abdallah sighs, his pulse enkindled beats, As one who, threaten'd in his life or bride, Desponding muses what to yield or hold, Till stung in honor, wounded in his pride, For Love resolves to struggle staunch and bold, So now the King remorse felt, pain and shame To hear a vassal scorn inglorious life, He felt, that Weakness brought on him the blame, Who ought to sink a monarch in the strife; Determination burned in his eye His countenance betrayed a settled will, But ere he spoke, they heard a piercing cry, A wail, as of a cat, intensely shrill; The guards made way, unearthly as a ghost A haggard shape of white dishevel'd hair, Of beard like snow, wild eyes in sockets lost, Of bony hands he clasped in despair, Into the presence of the Council burst And, raying madly, eyed the frighted men, As famish'd beast just issued from the den, That leaps on him who thwarts its pathway first. A santon he, the dweller of a cave

Who lives on roots or fasting spends his days, Less fit for life than for the open grave, Foretelling thus the King and Court dismays: "Granada falls, thy Kingdom hopeless sinks, Spare tears, spare blood, deliver to the foe Forfeited rule, Abdallah, last of Kings! Granada falls, great Allah wills it so!"

The santon flees unfollow'd to the gate, A scornful smile enlightens Muza's face, While King and Council utter: "God is great!" And for the final act their spirits brace. But O, resolve! resolve as much ye may, The agony to see the dearest go Is more than man can bear who, made of clay, Endureth often unendurable woe! Ay, tears are sweet which give the mind relief; They melt the ice within the bosom's deep, But Sorrow's heaviness, unbearable Grief Are his, who, tortured, can nor speak nor weep. Ye who did witness children watch the breath Of her endeared by a thousand ties, Of her who, closing her sweet eyes in death, Engenders hope of meeting in the skies, But leaves disconsolate a joyful home, May realize the pangs of them who stood Devoted to Granada's widowhood, Till dark reverses left for Hope no room, No moment granting ov'r her fate to brood, They seeing her irrevocable doom.

Next day, empower'd with the foe to treat, The Wazir issues from the city's gate; Half-way Spain's guards the Moor with honor meet And lead him straightly to their King in state; For word hath reach'd the Gothic camp that morn Which fill'd Hispania's heart with grateful glee, The Sovereigns chose, tho' of his lustre shorn, To treat the Wazir as an Embassy. A courteous welcome given is the guest, The Rulers deign accord him words of grace, His mansion and attendance are the best, For which the Moorish Kingdom dearly pays; He knows the nature of the shrewdest King, Prepares exorbitant demands to hear, The courtier's smiles his Moslem conscience sting, Resigned he sighs, he knows the end is near. Two lords of station with the Wazir deal

Gonsalvo de Cordova, a knight of deed, With shrewd Fernando doth the office fill; This last, a scribe to Ferdinand, can read As wise interpreter his master's will,

The rate appraising of his Monarch's greed. Cruel the articles they frame combined;

The Moor submissive each condition hears Unchangeable as Iberia's settled mind; He pleads in vain, there is no force behind To back his pleading, and he yields resign'd.

Henceforth Granada shall a province be, Her people subject to the rule of Spain,

The Moor unarmed shall therein live free By cadis judg'd with him in sympathy; But Gothic Governors he must needs obey, Unransomed captives to their homes restore, May freely emigrate or tribute pay; His King shall elsewhere bide as heretofore, Be prince and have a large estate to sway, Live royally, but King be nevermore. Four hundred children shall Granada send As hostages to make Compliance sure, To be returned to each parent's hand, Who shall as Moslems live in peace secure; Besides, two moons are granted as a grace To cherish hope of succor that might come; But should no help arrive in sixty days, Then shall Alhambra he a Spanish home; This treaty signed, a truce shall war replace The nations mingle unrestrain'd as one; To those too poor to buy their bread these days Supplies are granted by the Gothic Throne. Nor are grim menaces forgotten there, A special clause defines them in a word; Should Treason to good Faith the Moor prefer His punishment shall fire be and sword.

Thus furnished the old Wazir honor'd goes,
A pompous escort leads him near the gates
Where Plague and Famine are the ruthless foes,
An anxious Sultan for his tidings waits;
Alhambra's horsemen on the spot appear

And bid the Wazir straight the halls ascend Where King and Council are in doubt and fear, Lest black the message be he bears in hand; The messenger they watch, his mien and gait, As in he steps unhopeful to behold; His bosom heaves, he cries: "King, God is great, Things come to pass as holy men foretold, Who read the stars when first thine eyes did ope, And in Zahara's woes foreshadow'd saw This Kingdom's downfall, which, despite of Hope, We live to witness; such is Allah's law. A thousand empires before this fell, Mutation here is the immutable state; Islam commands impious thoughts to quell, Frail monarchs vanish, none but God is great." And: "Allah achbar!" faint the echo rings, Then silence rules, none daring to forestall The dismal tidings which the Wazir brings, For every utterance of Granada's fall, With whom the crescent's late dominion sinks, Is hateful to the ear of each and all; So in the house where on the death-bed lies A dear one stricken, sinking out of breath, One kindred reads the other's agonies But pales recoiling from the sound of—death.

[&]quot;Unfold the answer, Wazir, give in full
Thy errand's outcome, shorten our suspense;
If part we must with Royalty and Rule,
Whither shall we proceed, departing hence?

What must Granada do to please the fee? Allows the Christian King us breath and bread, Or plans he yet to heap more woe on woe To make us envy our heroic dead? Such be our destiny, the worst had come When Moslem dug for Moslem fame the grave; We lost our sceptre, we shall lose our home, And, after these, who deems life worth to save? O, day of sorrow! was I born to bleed, To write a tragic tale of woeful years, To reap the harvest of the evil seed, Cast ere I was to spring in blood and tears! Yet, who may chide what Allah preordains Tho' trials come the truest heart to wring; I know since childhood no surcease of pains; Speak briefly Wazir," cried the luckless King.

"Take heart, O, Sire, the golden sun is there,
The stars in blue, and Allah high above,
Cede Royalty thus coupled with Despair
For bread with peace and liberty to rove
Unguarded, safe, the humble mortal's share;
More than the phænix courted is the dove;
The cannon's clatter and the trumpet's blare,
The gilded hall's luxurious alcove,
Conspiracy in palaces not rare,
Outbalance they the heart-case of the swain,
Serene in soul, imparadised in Love,
Of happy feeling, unconsumed brain?
Untroubled who, afforded chance and choice,

Would long delay a man with men to be, Would not consult his reason's truer voice, Preferring Peace to glittering Misery?— Thy sceptre, King, the Gothic Rulers claim. This city, likewise, as the victor's prize; Hard was the chase, invaluable the game, They conquer'd us, it was no play of dice A giant power like this land to lame; Resistance failing, why express surprise? And uscless, sure, the Spaniard's greed to blame. Estate they give thee where the mountains rise, Where Alpuxarras, Andalusia's height. In fertile valleys, green throughout the year, A chain of hamlets hides of rural cheer, The seasons changing to enchant the sight With all those glories Alpine regions wear, Which brace the spirit and the sense delight. As hitherto the Moor shall tribute pay To his new master, after a suspense Of three years granted; and in mosque he may Great Allah worship in his Moslem sense, Embark for Afric or in Europe stay; Have judges of his own as heretofore, But he subjected to a Governor's sway To rule appointed by the Conqueror. And we, O, Caliph, Court and courtiers all, Must swear allegiance to Hispania's Throne And hostages, Disturbance to forestall, Must of our youth be given to atone

For broken faith, conditions unfulfilled.

The Christian captives shall unbought be free, And, that the lust for riot may be stilled,

To lay down arms the Moslem must agree.—
Such is the message I impart with grief

From victors who were deaf to my appeal
For milder terms; they answer'd gruff and brief,

Unmerciful implacable men of steel,

With scornful smile and features cold and stiff:

They spoke not theirs, but spoke Iberia's Will.

"Yet sixty days of hope for Fortune's turn
They grant, alas! should help from Alláh come;
Unblest my task; Hispania waits to learn
Thy pleasure, Sire; Alhambra not thy home!—
I must to-morrow with thy seal return
For seal thou must, King, seal Granada's doom."

"Say not we must!" resounded Muza's voice,

"The Wazir errs, we must not seal our shame;
As long as we can fight we have our choice,

The infidel shall not have cheap his game.
To arms, to arms, for Fame and Honor strive,

Lead forth our legions, let them wade in gore,

Their shades who fell in this tremendous war

Will ever frown if we our shame survive;

Unarmed once ye deeply sink beneath'

The haughty Goth, who will his pledge forget;

Will cause your blood with passions mad to seethe

And raise his belfry on your minaret,

Despise ye, aliens, who shall gnash your teeth

And rue the hour when thus arrayed in might, Divisions banner'd ready at your call, With chiefs to lead, a King to claim his right, In lieu of battle and a glorious fall, You seek Subjection with a lease of years To ruminate on triumphs ended poor, To watch the airs the Christian tyrant wears, And live a shadow of the mighty Moor. O, miserable the instinct of the slave, Who feels the lash a hundred times a day, Yet rather than oppose an odious knave, And share the honors of a freeman's grave, Degraded will in slavish fetters stay, As if to die for Life's divinest goal, For man's inalienable right to be Unchained in body, unsubdued in soul Were not the privilege of beings free. Ah, why fear Death? receive him with a smile, Not worse than Birth he comes a welcome guest; What ages ripen is by God's behest, Who, notwithstanding human schemes and guile, Ordained irrevocably for our best A name of lustre and a grave of rest; And tears, perchance, the aftertimes might shed On sacred tombs of dearly-fallen dead, Are precious jewels, inestimably dear Worth all the tinsel of a King's career. A martyr's death is Allah's blissful kiss. A sleep the angels in al Janet sleep, A dreamy foretaste of the skies of bliss,

'Tis Heaven's gateway mysterious and deep, Which opens when we, warring for our right, Vile Bondage hating, as the serpent's hiss, Arrayed in combat, sink free in the fight. A thrust, a hurt, a wound, and all is past; I saw such faces turned to the moon, Saw battling squadrons falling thick and fast, My soul was envious, it appear'd a boon To end thus facing an implacable foe, Who Islam scorns, abhors the Arab's race; Thus to repay the debt we Manhood owe, Can aught be worthier of great Allah's Grace?— Seal not our shame, it is not yet too late To do the wonder of this bitter war, Lead, Caliph, open every bolted gate, Lead all Granada, let our lombards roar; The world shall shudder when she reads the tale Of what befel us when our foes we tore: When Goth met Arab in Granada's Vale To see his armies stagger, shake and pale Before the vengeful ire of the Moor!"

This voice, which often drowsy cohorts sent
In seething waves against the enemy,
The timid drove to climb the battlement,
And youth inflamed with sturdy knights to vie
In feats of daring, deeds of Gallantry,
Its ring was mighty, and it fired all,
Moving the coolest to impassion'd thought;
Its living echo, trembling thro' the hall,

Was heard with wonder slowly die and fall
Until each ear the dying echo caught,
As if some magic Muza's ardor wrought;
But, soon subsiding, left a chilly sense,
Which damped passion in the bosom's well,
Oppressive grew the seconds of suspense,
Like sad vibrations between knell and knell.
Who will arise to say what shall be done?
The hours are fleeting, good advice is dear,
The Council ponders, silent is the Throne;
Thee, Yusef, now again the Court shall hear,
Who speakest wisely in suasive tone,
A sorry pleader, in thine eye the tear,
Nor is the sorrow in thine eye alone.

"O, valiant Muza, prince of generous vein,
Granada boasts, succumbing to her fate,
Of thee, great warrior, in her mortal pain:
Thou deep in nature, fiery in debate,
The grace of Knighthood, tho' in manner plain,
A man of lustre, mighty, good and great,
Thy plea is noble, ay, the noblest plea
I ever heard a human lip evince,
Were not our fall in plan of Destiny
We bent not thus despondent, noble prince.
Had Allah will'd our Kingdom to endure
A knight like thee had risen long ago,
Disinterested and of motives pure,
Thyself absorbed in thy people's woe;
But mortal prowess, gloried tho' it be,

Hath never broken thro' the fateful bars Invincible powers set by High Decree To earthly greatness no transition mars. The Voice unheard, the Hand of Mystery Direct the course of nations and of wars. And those mutations we call history, Man's rise and fall ordain'd is in the stars. Before the Void her shapeless masses bred, Before the sun, before the birth of light, Before the starry heavens vastly spread, Before the Ocean hid the mountain's height; Before this world rose bride-like from the deep To take her orbit in the Master's plan, When like a new-born infant Earth did sleep, Before all breath, before there was a man; When Night held sway and Chaos held his reign, Great Allah did, among events to come In all the orbs that sprung from the Inane, Decree and seal Granada's mournful doom.— Thy glory, King, it is a fate to bear That Faith and Perseverance sorely tries; We know the reason of thy bleached hair, Thy deep of sadness and thy burning sighs: My old eyes weep, I let them overflow, These tears are thine, my King, and ages late Will mirth suppress, and youth will cheerless grow On hearing of our sorrows and thy state, The minstrel's lip will tell our tale of woe And thrill the hearers with our tragic fate; No nation's overthrow doth Fame bring low,

Our name is deathless, for our fall is great.—
If Muzas all we were, and men alone
Inured to slaughter, fierce and reckless brave,
We might, despairing, make the Goth atone
By selling dearly things we cannot save,
Make one mad sally, cut or be cut down,
Until this Vale look'd one appalling grave.
One hundred thousand women, babes and maids
Bid us beware of heeding such advice;
A scanty tribute this paid mourned shades
Their nearest kindred thus to sacrifice.
Remember Malaga's heart-chilling end;
Surrender, Sire, our State had run its course;
We bend because great Allah bids us bend
And, bent and broken, we submit to Force."

As in the darkest hour when hearse and pall
The brightness darken of the brightest home
By those black symbols of the funeral,
When, Sorrow pressing too intense to bear,
The dismal outlook of the dreary tomb,
Subdued by suasion of the minister,

A while subside, but soon redoubled come
As out the coffin moveth, which contains
What of the living after death remains,
So dumb the Court beheld the fateful scroll
That bore the terms dictated by the foe;
With trembling hand the Wazir doth unroll
The document to cap Granada's woe.
As near the Ganges he with horror wakes

When cobra's chilly coils disturb his rest, He dares nor breathe nor stir, but smitten shakes, The monster nestled on his naked breast. So motionless the King sate mute and white, Unspeakable agonies his action lame All overpower'd, as in dead of night When ghastly dreams unbrace the dreamer's frame, Who tries to fly but moves not in his flight. Before him scroll and seal untouched lay, The seal inherited, a brilliant gem, Of potent caliphs who upheld their sway, In glory wore Alhambra's diadem, And muster'd armies to their foe's dismay, To be deliver'd by this last of them; The Moslem thus the Christian's helpless prey, Who ages strove the Arab's tide to stem. The moment came slow-speeding Time matured The moment when the ruthless Saracen, Who by his pluck and scimetar secured, The iron grasp Iberia endured Was forced to yield with one stroke of the pen.

Who doubts divinity in man may find
In moments fraught with danger or with fear
Angelic Sweetness in the nobler mind,
That spares for others in distress the tear
Of soft Compassion, the himself aglow
With unabating fever of the brain;
Thus here the Moors, forgetful of their woe,
Allow their sympathies for him to flow,

Who seems unable further to sustain
A Kingdom's downfall and a people's pain.
But frowning Muza strikes his clenched fists
Against each other with an angry clap,
No sympathetic tear his eyeball mists,
He forward paces, anger in his step
Ill-hidden wrath and grief and pity, too,
He, speaking to his King, tries to subdue.

"Farewell, my King, whom Muza cannot serve, The overwilling for his liege to die: Ye, fallen Moors, farewell, I cannot swerve From lines of honor, can nor weep nor sigh, Nor bend my backbone in submission base. Nor set my name on parchment to erase My nobler self, or cede my trusty sword, And be the creature of a Gothic lord. Yea, not for such a lot was Muza made Whose mettle brooks no course of servile deeds; I try once more my true Damascus blade, Bestride my charger, he the steed of steeds; Ascend the tower, Moors, before the cross Is mounted there, the erescent sinking low, Watch Muza's method to repair a loss He cannot bear, by one despairing blow: The world shall hear and coming ages know, Among the Moors who bent there was a Moor, Who could fell Monker face but could not bend To grace the triumph of the Conqueror, That Moor was Muza, Muza sword in hand."

These accents fall as hail upon the head
Of King and Council, who see Muza's face
Assume the hues and earnest of the dead,
Else affable with smiles of knightly grace;
He leaves the Court uncompromising stern,
Abdallah's heart is sore to see that knight
Thus flee Alhambra never to return,
Resolved to die in single-handed fight;
The strongest pillar of his bending Throne,
Sustain'd a season by that loyal hand,
Granada lasting by his sword alone,
Encounters render'd by his prowess grand,
With him departing are forever gone.

"Postpone not, Sire," the Yusef speaks again,
"Delay no longer Allah's high Decree,
Tho' hard the trial waiting brings no gain,
The city groans in utter misery.
Do timely, King, what Destiny commands,
A Moslem now, a Moslem thou wilt be,
Take we resign'd what Allah's Wisdom sends,
In bondage even royal souls are free;
Should Muza dare the Goth a blow to deal,
Provoke the vengeance of the victor's ire,
He might in wrath his promises repeal,
Granada give to pillage, sword and fire."

The Caliph waves his hand, as one in dread Of living speech, peruses line by line The fateful instrument before him spread, And, after silent tears are freely shed,

He signs and seals it and bids others sign.

The same, while he, with folded hands on head,

Afflicted to his royal rooms withdraws.

To let his wife and mother share his woes.

The Wazir bears the scroll to Santa Fé,

Alhambra's halls resound with dirges deep,

The sorrows grow too heavy for one day,

A fallen King and Kingdom wail and weep.

Meanwhile sequestering himself from sight Brave Muza at his entrance gives command To bar the portal till the fall of night Against Intrusion, be he kin or friend, While, as a priest intent on solemn rite, He makes abbution ere he sinks to pray As Moslem faithful, who, from dawn till night, Five orisons rehearses day by day. He looks too grave for her, who sees him come, A cloud of sadness darkening his face; She is his wife, the guardian of his home, Who longing waited for her lord's embrace. "Alas, why thus beclouded, dearest mine?" As timid child she questions her dear lord; "My Muza sad!" she must the cause divine, For, absent-minded, Muza speaks no word; Her heart misgives her and she can but guess Impending dangers or some fatal change, Some new reverses, or some great distress, Or, else some trouble of a nature strange.

Thus turned into self she weaves a maze
Of gloomy likelihoods she certain deems,
Till Self-compassion, while her husband prays
And lost in rapture or in vision seems,
Unseals the current of that mystic flow
A woman may at any hour in streams
Send forth to soften some oppressive woe
And with emotion mingle sobs and screams,

Her hand the warrior takes, his brow clears off: "Forgive Almina, sweetest wife," he cries; "Spare me an answer, O, I must be rough! But go I must impellèd by the skies To offer Islam bloody sacrifice; -Our Kingdom falls, they yield, I have enough, Myself I die for things I higher prize Than worldly pomp or lying epitaph; I swore a fearful oath in Allah's Name-To homage Freedom in despite of Fate I die for Faith wilt thou thy Muza blame?— Thou shalt be mistress of my fair estate When I am gone my meed above to claim May Allah's Peace prevail within thy gate! -Farewell, Almina, rule thy grief I pray, Courageous be as Muza's worthy wife; Between those leaves behold you straying ray, The fading emblem of a passing life, That comes and passeth as the fleeting day, And blessèd he who ends in manly strife, -Yea, weep, dear wife, Granada sinks with me,

A man is naught, but O, a nation's fall! The Goth the lord, the Moor in slavery, Shall Muza live to be a Christian's thrall? The crescent mourn, the cross in glory see With might within such heart-grief to forestall?— Why tremble thus, Almina? Why so cold?— She faints, the swoon will pass, my speech is coarse— Bring help, slow eunuchs, here your mistress hold!— It is a fainting spell, it might be worse,— Get spirits quick, her temples rub and head!— It were ungodly Destiny to curse— The man of simples call, put her to bed! Almina dear—Grief made her beauty old— The sun is down, I see the West is red; Here, eunuchs, do her in these quilts enfold— This kiss, Almina—cold her lips and head!— Here rub her forehead—I must end my course,— Farewell—this kiss, O Love!—my horse, my horse!"

The slaves obey, the master on a couch
His youthful consort rests with tender care,
Two waiting slaves his ponderous armor bear;
They dress him all in steel; with night's approach
He nimbly mounts his incomparable steed,
That beats impatient fire out of stone
And snorting neighs; impell'd by winged speed
It carries Muza thro' the gates alone
While mildly in the West the day goes down.
As when in Spring from Winter's dream the bear
Awakes exasperated, hunger-mad

And, fleeing his inhospitable lair, Roams wide and hunts until some blood is shed, Falls on his prey too eager to destroy Or heed Resistance or perceive a hurt, So Muza, thrilling with delirious joy, His charger reins and, like a feather'd dart, The challenge of the first patrol defies By furious onslaught with a cutting brand, The one he strikes transpierced sinks and dies, The others fail his fury to withstand. Three Goths fall smitten, nine surround the Moor, Who looks a demon risen from the flood Of Xenil's bed that near by placid flows; For more than man is he, they feel it sure, A shape of steel that seems to have no blood, And fighting weakens not but fiercer grows Since none escape the lightning of his blows, Which thick as hail reverberating fall, And thither draw in haste the next patrol. The stream behind, before him twenty-one, Brave Muza holds the chafing throng at bay And he who dares approach is overthrown, The others flit around, as birds of prey, Recoil as often as they near him draw With terror freezing, for they see there dim, Now magnified by Superstition's awe, A monstrous form, defiant, mute and grim. They try again and, failing, try once more The spectral figure stabbing to unhorse, But flee deterred, leaving as before

Under the charger of the dreadful Moor
Many a comrade as a lifeless corse;
When on a sudden, follow'd by a page,
Bold Ponce de Leon on the night guards lights,
And heaps reproach on them who thus in rage
One man ungallantly in strife engage,
Being an act that Valor's lustre blights.
"It is a demon," they reply, "who fights."

"And thou, brave Moor, whatever be thy name, Since peace thy Sultan craves, which Spain accords, Why seek in unbecoming prowess fame?" Thus Ponce de Leon in unhostile word. And Muza laughs the laugh of the insane, The sentries backward reel with pale affright: "Not I did crave the favors of thy Spain, And scorn thy courtesy, ungallant knight, Who dost in craven slaves a wrong disdain That brands with Infamy thy country's might, And marks as Robbery thy Sovereign's gain, Those trophies won in base unequal fight. Thy record, Ponce de Leon, I know well, Is one of blood, though varnish'd with false grace That ill-becomes thy murderous deeds of hell, As doth a pious mask the devil's face; If thou beest more than yonder dastards round, Prepare to shield the portions of thy frame, Thy curs there perish'd smitten on the ground, But unappeased Ambition frets for fame; For bleeding the I am from many wounds

I hunger for the lion fond of prey,
Ungratified by slaying Christian hounds;
Stand Ponce de Leon, Muza thus defies
Thy bustling self, thou prone weak lives to slay;
Or Muza here or Ponce de Leon dies,
Retreat no pace, lest yonder cowards say:
Who calls thee Ponce de Leon should as prize
Receive a halter from the fiend of lies."

The bravest Spaniard answers with the deed, The others watch intently how their knight The Moor confronts, each couching on his steed With deadly weapon pointed for the fight; Some seconds pass, shrill Muza's charger neighs, A distant echo shivers thro' the night, When at the Moor the Goth with tempest flies, Is met with spirit, wild the horses rear; The Moslem bleeds, the Christian bleeds withal, They part to breathe, both faint and hurt appear; The Marquis fails a forman to recall, Who thus encounter'd him and thus repell'd, Though many famous warriors in that war In single combat he had fought and fell'd, He Muza's equal never struck before, So rock-like firm, so agile in his moves; Still eying viciously the proud grandee, His life is ebbing under many grooves The hurtful steel cut of the enemy.— As in the wilds a man may see by chance The savage bull, on whom the herd relies,

Leap forth to check another herd's advance,
With lower'd head the adverse leader eyes,
Then with mad fury drives his fatal horn
Into the vitals of the madden'd brute
Till one prevails, the other, cut and torn,
To death defends the region in dispute,
So Ponce de Leon yells before he leaps
To strike at Muza with astounding force,
The weaken'd Moor he from his charger sweeps,
And in the charge himself slips from his horse.
Renewed the feud is waged breast to breast,
The Moslem wavers, Death runs thro' his veins;
His thrusts are aimless and, toward the river prest,
He backward sinks, his blood the river stains.

Brave Muza drowns submerged by his weight,
The night is dark, the Xenil's bank is steep,
His bleeding charger flies to tell his fate,
The sentries know him at Granada's gate;
His wounds they bandage, tenderly they keep
The noble steed henceforth endear'd to all,
Who saw in Muza's death Granada's fall;
But mostly to Almina, who each day
Before the sun descended sought the stall,
When near the warhorse in the waning ray
She prostrate for her Muza used to pray.

BOOK VI.

ARGUMENT.

Columbus at Santa Fé. Fernando de Talavera spurns the conditions on which the discoverer proposes to go upon his Quest, and states his reasons. He is refuted by Columbus, who insists that his terms be finally either accepted or rejected. The Bishop, Talayera, receives a call from Torquemada. The Great Inquisitor invokes Talayera's assistance to counteract the endeavors of the Spanish Jews, one of whom was active at Court to avert by all means the impending calamity of banishment. Torquemada's views on the ancient race. Talavera replies evasively, alleging his own embarrassment in regard to the infatuation of the Queen with the projected Quest of Columbus. He promises, however, to do all he can. His private view of the Inquisitor. Abarbanel makes his last appeal to the Rulers of Spain in behalf of his people. The hesitancy of the royal couple is overcome by Torquemada's bursting into their presence, crucifix in hand, which he throws on a table, and warns them not to barter away their Saviour as Judas had done. Abarbanel leaves the Court, convinced that there was no hope of preventing the expulsion.

When he of Tishbite Israel to raise
From Baal's altars, did on Carmel's height
Invoke with fervor God's consuming blaze
Astarte's priests with Heaven's wrath to smite,
And, fleeing Vengeance, lived on angel's food
Full forty days, till Horeb refuge gave,
Thence, call'd to action from his lonesome cave,
He first perceived a storm uproot the wood
And shake the rock, when fearful earthquake came;

But not in these, the prophet understood, Was God Himself, nor in that mystic flame That swept the mountain with uproarious noise; He heard, when those convulsions pass'd away, The Holiest Presence in the gentlest Voice, And forward came to worship Him, and pray; So ever in this world the chosen seed No tempest seatters, which uptears the rock, Nor in man's annals is the blessèd deed Unrighteous Conquest or the battle's shock, That feline Rage and Thirst which never stop Till whelmed sink the shepherd and his flock, The peasant's homestead and the farmer's crop. Yea, in the sunshine, when the winds subside, The balmy breezes fraught with life unborn Along the valleys and the meadows glide And strew the gifts of Amalthea's horn; And as in Nature powers mild prevail, So in the drama of the human tale, The milder influences, like the dew, Undoing evil wrought by Passion's gale, The mind enlighten and the world renew. Extol, ye dupes, the conqueror and host, Those men-wolves, who this sacred star defile, To things unheeded first we owe the most, Were hitherto in densest error lost But for that babe a girl drew from the Nile.

Thus even while Hispania feels supreme
And speaks of triumphs in elated strains,

An humble man recounts to her his dream Of promise full to multiply her gains. High persons in his favor interfere, The Prior, Juan Perez, paved his way, Who by his pleadings won the queenly ear, And sent Columbus straight to Santa Fé. But as the thirsty pilgrim in the waste The near mirage hunts of the distant lake With parched lip the cooling wave to taste And inly groans, aware of his mistake, So, cross'd again of calculations dear, Columbus rose to fly the proudest Court, Where Fortune, never far nor ever near, Made him the courtier's play, the jester's sport; The wise appointed to consult his will Reject unceremonious each advance; Their envy hates to see a stranger fill A higher office, he a man of Chance.

"Señor," Fernando de Talavera cries

"Granada's Bishop now by Royal Grace,
I durst not for chimerical enterprise,
For windy promises such claims to raise,
Nor irreproachable I the Queen advise
The certain hazards of the Quest to face.
Unlimited dominion over lands,
A strong armada to explore the seas,
And profits such as but a Crown commands,
An eighth of all assumed discoveries,
With naught to lose and naught to guarantee

A fair return from an adventurous Quest, Would peradventure tempt some bold grandee Thus placed and armed to attempt his best For wealth and titles next to Majesty; Besides, our Sovereigns and exalted Spain, Now that the crescent from its height was hurl'd, Can no repute by such adventures gain, But move the laughter of the merry world. Enough the Queen, the outcome being vague, Her treasure pledges to promote the scheme, Which makes the cooler King the shoulder shrug At the contagion of a baseless dream, Slow to consent, lest the adventure fail With loss and sorrow and attendant blame, Like others who did likewise westward sail And perish'd unadorned by the name Of Royalty, which in itself is fame.— You would no sovereign Lady's fairness leave, Whom generous princes cheerfully obey, Should you succeed, your fortune to retrieve, Your efforts honor and your toil repay? Our Catholic Majestics, the Moor may tell, Hold promise sacred, whosoever be The subject favored, Jew or infidel, And would unwritten, I presume, agree To arm a force for the suggested Quest, And, barring your unreasonable demands, Yourself with unrestricted rights invest O'er all the oceans travers'd, all the lands;

Yet speak I this not by the King's behest

Nor by the Queen's, who for advice depends, Beside her lord, upon her ghostly friends."

"I pray Your Eminence may rate me less Presumptuous in the claim I humbly raise," Columbus answers with reluctant stress, "It is a brilliant chance which I embrace. My visions dazzle me, I must confess, Yet Christian charity should not abase A lofty impulse which immodest seems; Unconscious Inspiration lifts the soul Of bard and prophet to the highest themes, And men of emprise toward the highest goal. I risk not less in hazarding myself Than any man who, fond of child and wife, Of Love and Honor fonder than of pelf, Endangers all, endangering his life; Inscrutable Providence denies the one Such gifts as others need to hold their own. The more I ponder over things below The clearer seems the Providential plan In my conception of the high and low; Those marks discriminating man from man Are they of human fancy stamped here? The noblest they, who sprung of titled line, And they base-mettled born in humbler sphere? Are souls inspired, instruments divine Thro' whom irradiating virtues shine, Men destined Heaven's light on earth to throw,

Thro' darkness breaking, hidden things to see,

Reveal a truth to let it shine and grow,

Less honorable than prelate or grandee?

Ah, be it said, it is a world of shows—

Your Eminence forgive, my heart is sore—

A world of glitter, God Almighty knows,

With preference for toys, and evermore

Unripe in judgment tho' it older grows

In years; still unenlighten'd, slow to learn

The blessèd lesson of the blessèd Lord,

It ever doth for pomp and lucre yearn,

The weapon deeming mightier than the word,

The spirit's fire weaker than the sword.—

"No titles mine, no minions heed my nod,
Retainers follow not my gilded heel,
Yet, like the great, I am a child of God
And have, like them, by His Supremest Will
A task to do, a mission to fulfill.
Had hitherto the world been unredeemed
By him who, tho' untitled, felt and dreamed,
Redemption, as of yore, would surely come
Not from a castle, but some humble home.—

"Still uncurtail'd the costly prize I ask
For empire I now in prospect hold;
And where Hispania's risk? Undone the task
I neither power seek, nor fame nor gold;
But being done it might all risk be worth,
It might be races lost in Error saved;
It might be realms, it might be half this earth.

It might be hoards no Christian ruler craved;
And not, ere proof and fact the truth attest,
That mighty empires and wealth be there,
Not ere I hitherward bring from the West
Of what that hemisphere produces best,
Shall I presume to claim my earned share.
And furthermore, if outlay count for aught,
I bear an eighth of all the costs and fees,
And, by the rule all things are sold and bought,
An eighth be mine of all discoveries.

"Viceregal rule Hispania may well
Accord for kingdoms offer'd at her feet,
Subdued unwasted, conquer'd by the spell
Of hundred mariners, a nameless fleet,
While of her hazards there remains to tell;
Three vessels lost would make her whole defeat—

"To have the Royal Seal confirm my right
Implies, Your Eminence, no base Distrust,
For monarchs change, and things that are to last
Are safer settled written black on white.—
Be this the end of pleadings long unweighed,
Spain owes me years unprofitably gone,
Her sanguine wars the answer oft delayed,
And oft delayers, who surround her Throne.
I am resolved, should I yet hear this day
The word that gives no expectation hope,
I should no hour, no, should no moment stay
But hurry elsewhere, sure of ample scope

To see a twelvemonth hence climes far away With golden promise of a blessèd sway."

Columbus closes with an inward sigh
The Prelate answers: "You shall hear from Court;
The princely titles, which your claims imply,
With these my colleagues I shall straight report
To her who may with your demands comply
If she be fond of risk and costly sport."
The Genoese withdraws, the Bishop sneers,
Derision spreads to every face and look;
His haughty scorn is shared by his compeers
Who can the stranger's arrogance not brook:

"This be a modest suitor," said the priest,

"A flowery talker with a knack to fool

Such as hunt Fortune in a sea of mist;

He should be glad some empire to rule

If not as king, then as Viceroy at least;

And we are named the lazar's cue to pull

With all the show of solemn ridicule,

Lest unadmired he might run away

And give some dupe his lunar world to sway.

Who is that man, whose voice should have a ring

To ears of Majesty and men of state?

Why should a Court his vagaries debate?

I see as much in him as does the King,

I see as much in him as does the King, But fools are there, who of his mania prate To our good Queen, who, womanly elate, Undue attention to the venture gives. Still wavering she doubts her reason's light,
She doubts her doubt, and doubts what she believes,
Feeding unwarned those illusions bright
By that adventurer's discourse misled,
Who like a boy recites the tales he read.
The Queen shall hear me unabash'd protest,
And if she heed no warning, no advice,
Our zeal is justified, our sense exprest;
We wash our hands of this mad enterprise."

Agreed they part but at the outer door
Fernando de Talavera gravely bows
Before a monk of overclouded brows
And thus accosts the Great Inquisitor:
"Your Eminence unguarded, not a spear
To ward off Danger ever at your heel!
What potent cause leads Torquemada here?
Walk in, walk in, and do your mind reveal.
If aught of sacred interest it be
You have at heart, command if serve I may;
You meet me bound for Court the Queen to see,
Yet have I time for you, step in I pray."

As in the fable stork and fox include,
Unhearty courtesies their deeds divulge,
So Talavera and his visitant
A frigid envy hide behind the flow
Of honeyed speech they insincere know
Each other doubting, both on mischief bent.
"I need no guards where Majesty is near,"

Speaks Torquemada in a solemn tone,
"The Lord, his Son, and Satan's wiles I fear;
Assassination shuns Hispania's Throne;
Ay, Satan's wiles, may Talavera hear,
To thwart is more than I can do alone;
Wherefore I seek your help, appointed well
Granada's Bishop, high in favor now,
To pledge the might by whom the crescent fell
By Heaven's Justice and His Lamb to vow
To scorn the profits which to Spain accrue
From shelter given to the cursèd Jew.

"Or now or never,—for the iron glows And beaten timely, must insure success,— A chance unused sometimes forever goes; You do our Monarch's confidence possess, Assist. Señor, to strike the Saviour's foes And spare the Church, and spare the State distress. For undermining Christian faith, the seed Of Abraham, unground, still blossoms free; That baneful remnant will at last succeed In hurting all, as Plague and Leprosy. To them the Kings for moneys must appeal, To them the powerful must bend for aid; The gold is theirs and theirs the art to heal; Ensuared the Christian courts the Jewish maid; The Goth of noble blood, in combat brave, Sees aliens rooted in his conquer'd soil, Himself impoverish'd, with none to save Him, left unholpen for the Hebrew's spoil.

I often moved the King to move the Jew Toward Heaven or Hell, as he himself may choose. But move he shall; I did my suit renew Before their Majesties with urgence due. The tribes of Judah feel their ground is loose And palms are gilded with their gold profuse. Tho' none that pest hath dared yet to disprove, As I proceeded to uproot the foe, I felt a counter step to every move, Λ counter-current running deep below Of gold, I doubted not; the devil knows To buy the weakest of his pliant foes.— You know the Jew of whom his race is proud, The son of Mammon whom the great obey, Don Isaac Abarbanel with prayers loud And bags of coin arrived at Santa Fé; And sure enough, he hath not long to wait In private audience King and Queen to meet; Great friends hath he, all pillars of our State, Who for a favor Christ laid at his feet.

[&]quot;How great God's Mercy, great the Son He sent
To such a world, so steep'd in sin and vice!

If I were He I had the mountains rent,
In fire-clouds I made the oceans rise,
One dome of blaze I made the firmament,
Till all is hell, except the highest skies,
Where I reserved some undisturbed bay
For pious Christians, who their sins confess;
I gloried Heaven by one auto-da-fé,

Consuming Guilt, destroying Wickedness. Five thousand heretics I on the pyre Saw bound and gagg'd in agonies expire, Beside the throngs consumèd at the stake Of twenty cities, who the hydra burn; But, as if demons from the ashes wake, New reprobates arise at every turn, The hellish work renewing we begin, Yet find unconquer'd the domain of Sin.

"Temptation is the cause, who will deny? Temptation man from Eden's bowers drove, Temptation madden'd Lucifer in the sky When, led astray, he 'gainst Almighty strove; Temptation Judas caused to sell our Lord, Temptation hates the Christian good and true; Temptation Virtue stabs with hidden sword, Temptation, Talavera, is the Jew; The Jew, the tempter, in his wiles behold, The devil's angler with a hook of gold, Behold him there, a tempting bait in hand, To catch the Sovereigns of this Christian land! No blame be mine if he unhurt remain, A chronic sore a holier age will rue, I strive, a minister of Rome and Spain, But who may infidels with faith imbue? Who thirst for wealth or love of pomp subdue?—

[&]quot;To-day, I am aware, the King and Queen Don Isaac's bribe will balance with his plea,

And Satan may his glossy harvest glean,

The Jew outbid the Church and Holy See;
But Christ will Torquemada help accord

And I shall do what I as monk must do
For dear Salvation and our blessèd Lord,

And if I fail, I fail a Christian true
Unbribed, uncorrupt, at war with Sin;

I shall not die my Saviour's blood unpaid,
Who ransom'd me, and shall my triumph win,

Or will with martyrs be a martyr laid
Till Doomsday's trump awakes me to begin

The saint's career in robes of radiance made;
Will Talayera Torquemada aid?"

The Bishop shudders, thro' his body run
Those cooler currents of a ghostly awe
That in the haunted desert steals upon
The wanderer as moon and stars withdraw
Behind portentous clouds, which thicken fast,
The voiceless dark unbroken by a stir
Of living creature or a passing gust,
When, like a load, oppressive weighs the air.
Then, as one lighting on a person feared,
Accosted, answers, anxious to retreat,
So Talavera quick his pathway cleared
By making offer at the Court to meet.

And: "Power of the Church," the Bishop says,
"A useless help you seek, yourself so wise,
Of Rome's high Pontiff holding all the ways

On earth to Peace, in heaven to Paradise.

Archbishop the my province is but small,
And small my influence beside your own;

By your decree the fallen deeper fall,
A mighty voice but second to the Throne.

Would Heaven I had such holy work on hand
I fain would join your sky-approv'd crusade,
But I to foil a scheme must have a friend,
A serious menace with good help invade;
That misty scheme of an infatuate brain,
A visionary's madness all in all,
The witling's jest, the wiser man's disdain,
Raving, as Islam's fool, they santon call,
Unsparing like the cuckoo in refrain.

"Who, knowing Isabella's piercing eye,
Would think it likely, that a Genoese
Could make her sounder sense on dreams rely,
And see the phantom sights that dreamer sees,
Who builds on stories good for nurseries?
Yet in his claims and clamors mighty large
That braggart swells of undiscover'd lands,
And Talavera holds in trust the fudge—
An honor Torquemada may not grudge—
The message likewise which Columbus sends
To King and Queen; for I am to be judge:
Whether unclaimed kingdoms in the sea
Were now mature for his discovery;
Which, to be open, I could just as soon
Say who the man be looking from the moon,

As, being asked, tell our gracious Queen What nor myself nor any one had seen.

Such be my task, yet help me God as I

Will help the better side as good I may,

To make the infidel Iberia fly

Or be the pyre's unredeemed prey."

"So be it, Talayera, be it done At once; for at this hour I apprehend The Jew importunates the lenient Throne With tempting artifice and, gold in hand, Like Satan frustrate may our holier end, The Godhead scorning and His only Son, And make the Church for Hebrew guilt atone. Whole-hearted Advocacy we require, The Jew Hispania shall of Sin relieve, Or be the fuel of the smoking pyre, If, being baptized, he the Lord deceive." As child who teacher, desk and school-room hates, The master's going sees and breathes light, So Talayera but an instant waits Till Torquemada passeth out of sight, When, drawing breath, he thus his latent spleen Gives vent against the grim Inquisitor Who, too much countenanced by King and Queen, His milder counsels ofttimes overbore.

[&]quot;I know thee, black tormentor, know thy greed
Insatiate, thou worse than Jew and less than man;
A dragon's shape hides thy monastic weed

With sting to poison whom it poison can; The gentler methods of a gentle creed, The Saviour's meekness, God's unbounded Grace. That sweet emotions in the bosom breed, And are in essence our Messiah's creed, To thee are foreign, bound to ruin a race That bears the traits of the Redeemer's face. The Jew's distress would Christian faith increase! Av, aftertimes will give the Church the lie. Who flavs the Jew to get his golden fleece, And plays the game the spider plays and fly. But who dare utter truth! The Queen is blind And heeds the message of the Holy See; In childhood Torquemada warp'd her mind, And, as to profit, Church and State agree, But freer than my tongue my soul shall be."

Searce hundred paces distant from the place,
Where things of moment are thus plann'd and said,
With palpitating heart Don Isaac prays
To move the sympathies of Royal Grace;
The Rulers listen, the appeal is made
In Mercy's name; they watch the pleader's face
Themselves alone, for, save the King and Queen,
And he that pleads, none other views the scene.

[&]quot;You heard, Señor, what State and Church demand; Free leave be yours to speak," the King began; "Your people hold their destiny in hand. 'They shall accept the Saviour of man,'

The Pontiff bids, and such is our command,
Or wander hence. The unproclaim'd the ban
Your people's sojourn short is in this land;
In vain we hesitate, the tide runs high,
Against your race the strongest currents flow;
For victories beholden to the Sky
We bounden feel to let His Kingdom grow."

"His Kingdom, Majesties, of Justice pure, Of Love and Peace as His true Word proclaims, Could Wisdom man of all his errors cure, Would shine on earth as it from Azure flames; But Love and Peace with Justice dwell alone Among the spiritual hosts above Beneath Almighty's empyreal Throne, We neither Peace meet here below, nor Love. Yea, frail the race and thoughtless, cruel, too, The son of dust, ungrateful, fond of gain, Else wiser ends on earth he would pursue, With wiser sentiments his child imbue, And, godlike dower'd, godlike here would reign, Diminish Sorrow, soothe a brother's pain, In lieu of striking wounds which never heal, Or sowing wrong to reap in later years, Beside the shame impartial times reveal, The evil harvest evil-doing bears.

"They grossly err'd, who, by Conjecture led And, unillumined by the Clearest Light, In lower creatures reverenced the dead, While men fell victims, taken in the fight;
But since the Faith of Love a world proclaims;
Since Moloch thirsts no more for infant's brood;
Since Horeb trembled, Carmel saw the flames
Of God Himself confirming what is good;
Since Revelation Vice and Virtue names
How can be Truth, how God misunderstood?
Ay, even the brute, our olden Laws enjoin,
Be unmolested, suffer no distress,
And less than this should brood of human loin
The stings experience of man's heartlessness;
But justify who may unjust decrees
With evil fraught for myriads pure in faith,
Unfaltering in whelming miseries,
Uncompromising, unappall'd by Death?

"Of those great races Providence ordained
The uninspired bulk of man to raise
Above such dark misdeeds as often stained
The human records, each and all have gained
An honor'd station and a share of praise;
Immortal monuments the nations guard
With jealous pride unblamable in them,
Who find in Truth a people's bright reward,
In works of peace a kingdom's diadem.

"Among the nations gloriest the race, Who early foremost in Almighty's plan, Throughout this earth the human spirit sways, Sole-ruling since the infancy of man, Sole-ruling still wherever mankind prays
The God of Sinai, yea, deny who can.
Rome burn'd the Ark, our Sacred Law therein
Outlived Rome and lives in million arks,
Before Your Throne pleads one of David's kin
A kindly feeling for a race to win,
The martyr'd children of the patriarchs;
If Judah sinn'd, how great must be his sin!

"When visitations dark from heavens pour, When man encounters Famine or Disease, Devouring floods or flames which burst and roar; When Danger threatens large communities, Man's faith uproused sees in every ill A hidden purpose with some end in store And bows submissive to the Highest Will, Who hath a balm for every mortal sore; None question powers who no answer give: 'So must it be and so it be,' we say; All happens for our best, we do believe, And, plung'd in grief, we bend in awe and pray; Not thus ungrumbling man affliction takes From human hand and, feeble tho' his cry It in the heavens fearful echoes wakes, Where weeping angels rue his misery And, ever-ringing, chain and tyrant breaks, For Justice, throning watchful in the sky, Almighty's Mercy with Compassion shakes; Impugned there who will not answer: why He revel'd here in human agony?

Why torture Judah, Sire, who named his guilt?

Why harass Joseph, scare Jeshurun's peace,
Who, God proclaiming, His first Temple built,
Requited thus with woes and agonies?

Why from his native soil the Jew expel
Who skyward prayer sends for King and Queen?
Unnamed his wrong, Your Majesties know well,
Unsound the temper of unholy spleen,
The spleen that boils and makes the bosom swell
With fetid scum, like a pestiferous well.

"Ere Goth set foot upon Iberian soil,
When Solomon's fleet from Ophir treasure brought,
Ere Carthage fell, ere Spain was Roman spoil,
Ere Gracchus' host the Celtiberi fought;
When ships of Tyre hoards from Tarshish bore,
Judean venture sought a wider sphere,
Our vessels landed on Iberia's shore,
And ever-after Jews are settled here.
Now, threaten'd in possessions dear to man,
We dread the horrors which the homeless know;
Ay, worse than death is the impending ban,
The edict issued, whither shall we go?

"Hoar tombstones mark the ashes of our dead,
The infant dreams where once the parent lay,
Who long ago was by a mother fed,
Herself the darling of a sire gray
An earlier father with affection bred;
How, being grateful, loving Honor may

A loving son an ancestry betray?

Shall Treason save us from a dire fate?

Will base Desertion satisfy our foes?

Will nothing less allay the Pontiff's hate,

No lesser sacrifice appease the State

Than Jewish faithlessness or Jewish woes?

"No holy water, no, nor fire can Make of the loyal Jew a Christian man; This truth, O Monarchs, hundred dungeons tell Where baptized Jews in horrid torments shake, Sustaining tortures of a living hell To die as Jews, deliver'd to the stake: For Hebrews will the Only God confess Despite of thumbscrews and of glowing rods And frustrate tyrants like Epiphanes, And suffer outrage for their God of gods. If thousand swords this day by royal will, Instead of Banishment suspended now, Were drawn ummerciful our blood to spill, No truthful Jew before the cross would bow; No, loyal Judah will the King obey, A humble subject to his Ruler's Throne, Will nor his Monarch nor his God betray, Unswerving Fealty is the Jew's alone.

"And can a virtue sovereign minds revere,
The highest theme of all the leading schools,
As gravitation ruling every sphere
Above, below, as far as Virtue rules,

A stigma turn to hurt a people's fame, The lower passions of chivalrous Spain With nameless hatred 'gainst a race inflame, Must Faith unshaken, Fealty prove our bane? The world in Faith is rooted; State and Crown Call faith Allegiance; Treason Faith deceives; In intercourse the nations count upon Each other's faith; the youth the maid believes, The spouse her mate; the prophets faith demand; The priest enjoins faith; nor need they prove To such as hope and such as have a friend, And such as woo the maiden's heart and hand, That, since this breathing world from Darkness hove, It stood by Faith; for Faith is Trust and Love. Our faith is perfect, God is ever just, Our hope is great, the golden rule is ours; That man may Godward rise we pray, and trust, He will, who now his brother-man devours. God's children we to whom this earth is given, A heritage none right hath to dispute, For all His blessing flow from earth and heaven,

For all, great Sovereigns, even for the brute.

[&]quot;May Justice rule before the wrong is done
Late generations will recall with pain;
May Mercy sway, may Grace shine from this Throne
Of laurel-crowned, high-exalted Spain.
O, tears and blood will flow if prayers fail,
Your Majesties are loving, are beloved;
I hear in spirit thousand mothers wail,

The ban their babies slew your seal approved;
The ban like Pestilence will masses slay,
Will strike as lightning Innocence and Age;
Ah, whither fly, grim foes an ambush lay
And Murder lurks for victims in a rage?

"But for exalted Rule enthroned in awe— A faint reflex of Majesty Divine-Unsafe were Justice, unavailing Law, Who unabash'd the rights of man define; God crowns the monarch to sustain the weak, To right the wrongs of such as weeping kneel, Before the Throne with trust protection seek, As I, my Sovereigns, to your hearts appeal. Protect us, Princes, prostrate I beseech, Protect the helpless infant from Distress, The cries of myriads will Almighty reach, The moans of Childhood sunk in wretchedness. Who will not overrun the outlaw'd Jew? Ah, hear me yet before the Furies rise, Before to evil tongues you sacrifice Unguilty myriads who with homage due, Reposing confidence in Rulers wise, Thro' me a loyal gift with love convey, A ransom free the threatening ban to stay.— Here, thirty thousand ducats, King, ask more, If gold be needed charges to defray Incurred by the outlays of the war, And shield the sinless babe, let Age escape The horrors of a homeless death; yea spare

The mother madness and the daughter rape;
Deal justly with a people who thus bear
Of all sublunar woes the greater share.
Our Guardian slumbers not and He will hear
Our cries of anguish, count each sigh and tearRelent, relent, deny the Royal Seal
To injure Faith, a Crown's divinest gem,—
The tide of Hatred and Injustice stem;
Relent, O Spain, forbear thy sons to deal
The mortal blow Rome dealt Jerusalem."

Unequal promptings move the Royal Pair,
Both ponder over the impending shame;
The Hebrew's ducats are the King's first care,
The gold, the gold, which fann'd the pyre's flame;
A nobler impulse rules the nobler Queen,
Who dreads the cruelty she trembling sees
And, ever tending toward the weak to lean,
Recoils with fear from flagrant outrages.
As pale as Death Abarbanel awaits
The Royal Pleasure, but no one replies;
The King and Queen are mute as are the Fates,
A spreading tear he dashes from his eyes.

Now sudden, as a bomb which bursts and flies

To distant quarters, frightening all around;
Or as a mine sprung on a foe, who tries

To countermine Destruction underground,
So wrath-enkindled Torquemada broke

Into the presence of the King and Queen

And, crucifix in hand, he sharply spoke

In pungent wording with sardonic mien:

"Here, take him, Sovereigns, sell our Lord again,
Whom Judas once for thirty pieces sold;
The devil triumph over Christian Spain,
The Christ for silver sold, ye sell for gold;
Betray the Crucified and please the Jew,
Perchance the shining sun will turn as pale
As when his pallor smote Iscariot's view;
The world shall hear our Master is for sale."

As when a blazing flash from Azure breaks,
Benumbing strikes and leaves a sense of awe,
So Torquemada's wrath cold horror wakes
In King and Queen, who straight abash'd withdraw;
For there before them, pinion'd to the rood
The worship'd image left distorted lay;
The thunder struck, the Hebrew understood,
Who fled the Court, a picture of dismay.



BOOK VII.

ARGUMENT.

In an interview with Isabella Talavera declaims against the projected Quest by Columbus, declaring it to be an adventure unworthy of royal sanction and patronage. The Queen's irresolution yields to the Bishop's persistent opposition, whose will is suffered to prevail over that of anyone else to the discomfiture of Columbus, who, recognizing in this result the adverse mind of Talavera, leaves Santa Fé full of bitter disappointment. His departure induces his friends, Quintanilla and St. Angel, to interpose emphatically in favor of the Quest, presenting the grave error to the Queen of losing such a splendid opportunity for aggrandizement as is afforded by the proposed expedition to the West. In this they are warmly seconded by the court lady, Doña Beatrix, who speaks in high words of the Quest and the man who harbors such lofty ideas and feelings. Isabella is favorably affected by the enthusiasm of the pleaders. St. Angel offers a loan to defray the expenses of the exploit, and a courier is sent to overtake Columbus and bring him before the Queen. Meantime the Queen informs the King of her resolution to stand all the hazards of the enterprise, to which Ferdinand would not listen, insisting on Aragon's duty to share all the risks of Castile. A scene of marital affection follows. Columbus returns to the city and is received in an audience by the Sovereigns. He is formally invested with power and authority to enter upon his Quest in the name and for the benefit of Spain.

That self-same morrow Talavera sought
The Queen's attention, eager to declaim
Against the inspiration she had caught
Of that intruder, who was much to blame,
The Bishop thought, "intemperate to press
For speedy action, when the step implies
Your full support as queenly patroness

And with it risks and costly sacrifice.

Monarchal powers, nothing less would be
Accept as meed for tales he glibly tells;
Viceregal lordship over land and sea,
Dynastic heritage, and all that swells
Imperial bosoms heaving on a Throne,
Unhesitating he considers these
His rightful due for such discoveries
As are for him reserved, for him alone,
He bluntly elamors in a boastful tone.

"My judgment disapproves adventures new,
As airy castles cheating eye and sense,
I am for Caution with the cautious few
Who scorn unreal glittering pretense,
And rather should a doubtful loss review
Than overhasty trust a doubtful chance.
Let vassals blunder, let the base-born fall
In estimation of their like; who cares?
But let the Ruler on his pedestal
Beware of Error, since a nation shares
The Monarch's folly, who can ill-sustain
The subject's laughter, or a world's disdain.

"Forgive this frankness, Queen, the heart inspires
The lip with candor; Conscience stifles fear;
We praise Devotion, yet she often tires
When adverse to some preconception dear.
Convey Your pleasure, gracious Majesty,
Procrastination must this morning cease;

A fleet with powers over land and sea And royal titles Vanity to please, He claims for his assumed discovery; Naught less will satisfy the Genoese."

And Isabella in a painful mood:

"O, for a convent in the lonesome heights, Or for a hermitage in Solitude,

From worldly Turmoil far, that hourly blights The godlier quality of Womanhood Unmeant for usages as coarse and rough

As War and Conquest and affairs of State; What ruler, Lord, what queen is wise enough To rule a nation, shape a people's fate! The soul is full of tremor and distaste,

Of doubt in self and those who give advice; Who, being frail, may in presumption rise To solve great problems, solve them in a haste Unerring? who, Señor, among the wise

And holy men could thus on self rely—
And I Your Eminence herein comprise—
In graver emprise prompted from On High?

"Well said and true, but perfect men should reign,
Alas! how rare the phænix in demand!

Not more than men are kings in heart and brain,
Tho' godlike powers lie within their hand;

Yet, being Queen, my lot is to decree;
What shall I say? Your judgment shall prevail.—
This morn will linger in my memory,

Methinks I hear a people's curse and wail.

Who knows, who knows if righteous it be,

If God approves such injury to man!

It was the mandate of the Holy See,

The Pontiff urged us to sign the ban;

I see the evil, Torquemada sees

Vast blessings spring from Jewish miseries.—

He had his will; Yours be the right to use

Your better light, and send the man reply;

Too many cares my feeble head confuse,

Archbishop you, an erring woman I;

It is but meet that we on you rely."

"The Lord enlighten me," the Bishop said; "My taste is dull for venturesome designs, You have for Greatness good foundation laid, Resources great are Spain's and precious mines; A field of conquest waits on Afric's shore, And Europe, never-settled, open stands With tempting chances for successful war, Why send a fleet in quest of fabled lands? Twelve cycles roll'd since God made earth and sky, Great men have risen, sages passed away Bequeathing wisdom how to live and die; In Holy Writ the prophets nothing say Of tribes or kingdoms sunder'd from the rest Of human kind; would not the records tell, If true it were that races toward the West The waters travers'd there thenceforth to dwell? Like Death, the West hath never render'd back

The daring mariner who sought the vast,

And he was lost who follow'd in his track,

And like the first engulfed is the last.

Abysses yawn, and whirlpools break that sea,

Prodigious monsters, huge as isles afloat,

And hollow noises, shapes of Mystery

Confound and whelm the hardy argonaut,

Who, unappalled, presumes to lift the veil

Kind Heaven threw upon those regions drear,

Which are the burden of the seaman's tale

And chill one's marrow with well-founded fear.

"Shall Royalty Ambition's madness grace
And Spain be sponsor to an errant fool,
Who vagrant, half informed, has the face
To ask for vagaries viceregal rule?
Howbeit, if I err my soul is free,
The man of Genoa do what he may,
Depart at once, or still intruding stay;
To give him leave to go Your Majesty
Empowers me, and he may go to-day,
And go he shall, if I the word may say."

A queenly nod the Bishop gratified
Who, jealous since fierce Torquemada won
His baneful end, the Genoese replied
In hottest hurry and unsoothing tone,
A tone that hurt and hurting still defied
And stung the victim from behind the Throne.
O, cruel dealing this a monster may

In brutal malice or in sport display,
But man of woman born, divine in soul,
A heart within, a conscience that reproves
Inhuman action causing woe and dole,
Why sting a being of the God who loves
All beings equal, sting and watch the pain
The poison breeds, inflaming every vein?

As one suspecting an ambiguous friend And, finding more than dark Suspicion guess'd. Doth Faith and Friendship with Dishonor brand, And wrathful raves, in head and heart oppress'd, So did Columbus, when the message came With leave to part and hints unwonted mean, A hateful anger feel his heart inflame: Sharp was his censure of the heartless Queen With whom he coupled Talavera's name. An artful priest, a bosom full of spleen. And as a youth betray'd by her he thought The truest bosom for his head to rest, He in his bitterness such solace sought As at the moment he assumed his best; For, overseething with unvented wrath, He, as a boiler with no outlet free, Or, as a man who, choking, gasps for breath. To void his heart rush'd forth for company But in the doorway met his best of hosts, A steadfast friend and honor'd high at Court; He, Quintanilla, who computes the costs The Crown sustains and yearly makes report.

"Bad news, Señor? I read it in your mien,
As bleached linen pale, bad news I see:
Your trembling hand holds tidings from the Queen:
Yet why thus down? what must be, friend, will be."
This Quintanilla to Columbus says
With soothing kindness Grievance to appease,
While he himself anxiety betrays,
And shares the sorrow of the Genoese,
Who, as one stabbed to his heart, his eyes
Half-broken turns in unexpress'd appeal

First to his friend, then upward to the skies, Ere thus his words a pungent mood reveal.

"Read this and judge if I have cause to grieve
And fume indignant at repeated wrong;
Thus twice deceived, hereafter whom believe,
Who sees man's heart, if traitorous his tongue?
The years I lost no monarch can restore,
The longest life is but a fleeting span;
The day that goes returneth nevermore,
And in my age I lost all faith in man.
No truth, no pity, Selfishness around,
The priest enjoins duties he neglects;
If Christian love be not a hollow sound,

It confirmation needs, and where the facts?
Why hunt for wonders and for martyrs hoar
For hellish pangs inflicted on the soul,
Of Innocence that persecution bore?
The waves of wee extend from well to note

The waves of woe extend from pole to pole; And heroes, love-deserted as of yore,

See days and seasons come and pass in dole. The sage of Greece who poison took and died. That one whom Vandals flayed in frenzied mood; The saints undone, the prophets crucified. Were not the last transfixed on the rood; No! agonies there be which long endure And burn within, an ever-living flame; Such pains are mine I vainly hoped to cure; I trusted Spain and am myself to blame. Señor, I am a Christian blood and brain, And all the instincts of my being yearn The mystic doctrine of our faith to learn, Yet can a Bishop I and priest disdain, Who thus unpriestly, perched on his hat, Sweet Charity offends a priest should show, Who wears the blessed cross as amulet To awe the ignorant and fool the low.— Between these lines you Talayera trace, My adversary he, it is too clear; And him, you know, the docile Queen obeys, Too many monks possess her pious ear. What loss of time! late wisdom thus obtained! Adieu, Señor, I stand as on hot coal; My thanks be yours to whom my heart is chained By Gratitude, but Spain is not my goal."

Besought in vain to wait another day Columbus tarried not another hour; He bade adieu to friends in Santa Fé, His mule he saddled and he rode away, In spirit wounded and in temper sour.

Friend Quintanilla hasten'd to see one
Of mind with him, and suasion to sustain
The worthy cause before a lukewarm Throne,
St. Angel he, a nobleman of Spain,
The King's receiver of ecclesiastic funds,
Unselfish, generous and unfond of gain,
A soul that, quicken'd, heartily responds.

Straight Quintanilla to the Court repairs
And, audience given, soon her spirit moves;
St. Angel helps, his voice her bosom stirs,
Her change of mind an error he declares;
Both boldly speak, their speech the Queen approves.

"This moment, Queen, Columbus left aggrieved To earry elsewhere promises we rate Too cheap, perchance, and might, once undeceived, Perceive our error, but perceive it late; For either Blindness safer leads than Sight Or Nature of her secrets none withholds From him enrapt in Faith and visions bright; The prophet's glow that Genoese unfolds. As he of hazards, climbing giddy peaks, Surveying scenes inspiring to behold, To those below in thrilling wonder speaks Of wealth and things before his eyes unroll'd, They, unconvinced, his offer to lay bare The hidden landscape with decision treat, When bolder strangers with the daring dare The land discover and its treasures share,

The others rueing self-enforced defeat: So we of Spain, too cautious, short of sight, May, oversubtile, forfeit by mistake The Christian's chances and Hispania's right To do our utmost for Salvation's sake. Invade the regions of the prince of night; If angels sleep the devil is awake.— The man's true quality I tested well And found it sound and noble, quick to rouse Responsive faith in all who heard him tell His matchless dreams retold oft in my house. Each time convincing, winning generous minds; As child unconscious of emotions pure, Save such as groundless Prepossession blinds In everyone his faculties allure His unreserved soul reliance finds I am a convert, frankly I confess, To his assertions burned in my blood, And humbly, Queen, I for Revision press, Let none mislead your queenly womanhood This land hath reason bending to revere. How slight the hazards balanced with the gain Which from this incident in your career Might yet accrue to world-admired Spain! How vast the loss should Gaul the harvest reap

Of boundless realms beyond the Western Deep!"

[&]quot;Alfonzo de Quintanilla hath my praise

For manly zeal on which our Throne is built;
But for the venture where the silver raise,

The coin, Senor, for which the mighty tilt? Without the coin the warrior to brace; The dagger rusts, like one of broken hilt. Then, strange embarrassment, yea, strange to see Unwisdom triumph scorned by the wise, Since State and Council, Church and Papacy, Unask'd or asked gave us their advice, And with the few the masses disagree, All wisdom seeming guess-work in disguise. God-fearing men dissuade a course they deem Unsuitable for Spain to dignify As royal emprise, being but a dream, A dreamer's fancy earnest men decry; The King himself with coolness treats the scheme, And I have scruples since the King is shy; For unsupported, should Misfortune come, The blame redounded on my single head, And low-voiced curses reached Heaven's dome, And growling murmurs: 'Yea, the Queen was mad.' How disentangle, then, the Gordian knot At this late hour, when Chance must go or stay? The minutes fly, and seconds count for aught, What hath St. Angel of the Quest to say?"

"Your judgment follow, gracious Queen, who can
In things uncertain speak a certain mind?
Who, studious to gladden every man,
Of hundred pathways may the safest find?
I am one-sided, Queen, and leans my view
Too much, perhaps, in favor of the Quest,

Am heart and soul among the bolder few, Too fond of conquest in the distant West To hesitate in saying what I say.

Surprised am I, and beg to be forgiven, At hearing undefied the tedious lav

Of cost and hazards, as if Spain was driven To risk her all, an emprise to defray, Which, come the worst, would hardly swallow more,

Allowance made for overtimid strains,

Than one day's cost in times of active war,

And that for empire large as twenty Spains. Had we no instance near at hand which sweeps

The mists from regions girdled by the seas,

It were most royal to explore the deeps

And clear the mind of dense obscurities.

Some kings have done, the ancient records show,

The noble deed, which makes a nation's boast; Thus Neku sent, two thousand years ago,

A Tyrian squadron round old Afric's coast.

Thence Portugal her empty coffers fills, Beside dominion widening each day,

While Spain's great heart with senseless terror thrills,

Afraid to venture out beyond the bay,

Altho' her might with wonder Europe fills,

When did the Goth a mightier pulse display?

Grant him the chance, who prays to be our tool,

A chosen man good Providence hath sent Yet more to glorify your glorious rule;

The Spaniard's energy is yet unspent,

Who longs to see his glory's measure full,

To see Hispania sway a continent,
Perchance the empire of the Great Mogul.
Consult, O Queen! the sacred Voice within,
Let Inspiration this great hour prevail;
The risks are small and there is much to win,
Consult the Lord, when did your judgment fail?"

St. Angel's fire struck and set ablaze The dying cinders in the royal breast, His brilliance did her spirit's vision daze, She thought she saw her Throne rise in the West, And look'd as one emerging from a haze To face the sun when shining at his best; So looks the sightless born who gropes in night, Deprived for years of Heaven's mellow ray, Who on a sudden is restored to sight, And, all amazed, beholds the rising day; Useless suasion, useless as the oar The boatman rests when down the rapids glides The shooting vessel, swifter than before The rower left her to the sweeping tides; But evermore it gladdens heart and ear, Once resolute, if one our aim extols; For like fresh leaven is the word of cheer Which, coming timely, Failure oft forestalls. A pleader gentler than the two who spoke Doth now her pleadings with the others mix, The Queen's self-confidence she doth invoke, She, titled lady, Doña Beatrix, Long royal confidante of great repute

Sometimes mistaken for the Monarch's wife, As when at Malaga a Moslem brute, A santon of sane reason destitute Intent on Vengeance, with assassin's knife Struck her, and, failing, perished in the strife.

"A wonder this, Your Majesty, why doubt The wonder-doing Grace of Him above, Who guards and guides His pious and devout Returning grace for grace and love for love, And multiplies the blessed seed we strew To raise a harvest which the times renew. Such is the generous fruit of trust we sow. It never dies unripen'd in the sod; For every kindness we in faith bestow Come many blessings from the hand of God. These pleaders, Queen, appeal in Heaven's Name, That from our Spain Columbus may not go, Whose glowing genius did our hearts inflame; God's growing Kingdom shall yet greater grow, And with it rise Hispania's deathless fame. Why him repel whose nature makes him great, As if another could be found like him. Unswerving in his course, a man of Fate, His vision piercing what to us is dim? Rare courage his, endurance rare and strong, Thus after years of calculations vain To spurn fair offers as inflicted wrong, And speak of titles in a princely strain, As one full-conscious of his worth and weight,

Despising rivalship in his domain, And selling kingdoms at a kingly rate, Who else could act thus but one formed great? Were he allow'd to pass beyond our reach, Your Majesty ere long might tidings learn That would this Court a tardy lesson teach, Too late the truth from error to discern; How hopeless then, how rueful, if it chance That power lost to Spain prov'd gain to France, Or Albion, or any foreign land Enriched by the man at our command, Whom we dismiss unwilling to concede A worthy title for a worthier deed. Yea, granted the dark prophets rightly see, The mere attempt unsolved things to solve Adorn the Ruler's awful Majesty, Involving Grandeur, if it naught involve.

"The risks are his, who takes his life in hand, Prepared the Ocean's hardships to endure, One eighth to bear of all expenditure For just an eighth of income and of land. In fairness, Queen, I trusted not the task To one less princely in his claim and tone, Why should a man small compensation ask For royal service render'd to a Throne? If Spain for Conquest looks athwart the brine God favors her in His inscrutable plan; To have her carry out His deep design He sent her one, Columbus is the man."

"Persuade no more, O Marchioness, Señores, Your sentiments are mine, it is God's will! I shall myself, should not the King endorse The enterprise, promote it for Castile.— A courier send, Columbus shall return, Be Aragon inclined as he please, Castile will hazard, she the honors earn, The pact be framed, Irresolution cease! War did his worse our coffers to deplete, Our costly triumphs drained land and Crown; We have few caravels among our fleet For high seas rigged to depend upon, And must contrive this new expense to meet, Postpone the emprise or contract a loan; And since Postponement zealous Ardor cools, The banker's coffer shall the sum supply And hold in pawn our old Castilian jewels, Till profits fair the lender satisfy; Ay, sceptred powers are but Heaven's tools Who, undeluded, never should defy The Will Supreme, who ruling dwells on high,"

[&]quot;Forbid it Heaven," St. Angel doth exclaim,
"Spain's honor bids such sacrifice forego;
It were our people's everlasting shame
To see their Queen, devout in weal and woe,
Her jewels pawn, while lavish her grandees
Vast fortunes waste on pompous vanities.
This action, Queen, spontaneous and sublime,
The times will chronicle among the great

Majestic actions sung in every clime,
Of Sovereigns worthy, worthy of a State
Like this that worships on the bended knee
In Womanhood the grace of Majesty.—
A Queen's behest can make a desert green
And turn a wilderness into a grove;
With your assent I offer, O, my Queen,
To furnish all the emprise needs to move;
I have some specie uninvested lie,
Enough of idle lucre wherewithal
The vessels and their gear and stores to buy,
Mine be the pleasure to advance it all;
One scarcely could to better use apply
His humble means than such demand supply."

The audience ends, the courier left the town,
Quintanilla smiles, St. Angel feels as high
As the himself were the Castilian Crown
And could the King and all the Court defy.

"I little care, should Talavera fume,"
Said Quintanilla, "the prelate bears his nose
Too high for me, and doth of late presume
As Rome's Infallible at Court to pose;
We did outbalance him, you did Señor,
Surpass his Eminence in word and deed,
He, preaching Love from the cathedral's floor,
Is much himself of kindliness in need;
I doubt the earnest of a Bishop's creed
Who slights the ordinance of Holy Lore
And soreness carries where the soul is sore.

When shriver to our Queen she bent her knee, While he erect her meek confession took, And, questioned why? his priestly dignity Referr'd unblushing to the Sacred Book, Where kings anointed low their heads incline Before the priest, the delegate divine To whom the greatest for salvation look. The bold demeanor gain'd the Queen's applause: 'The right confessor he,' she someone told; And ever since her soul he overawes. He dug for worms and struck a vein of gold. This time he miss'd the mark, we made the hit, Unless Columbus, driven by a gust Of righteous anger, will his gall permit To prompt his reason by experience past, Will shift abroad enormous benefit And give his friends a taste of his disgust."

Meanwhile the courier had the gates behind
And bounded forward, like a frighten'd deer,
He bore the errand printed on his mind,
A speech of promise and a world of cheer;
And as he gallop'd swiftly thro' the wood,
You half a mile before him he espied
The lonely traveler in a sulky mood:
"Hold on, Señor!" the lusty horseman cried,
"Hispania calls you back, return with me;
Your friends prevail'd whom I have heard and seen,
Your lucky star is in ascendency,
Return, Señor, now welcome to the Queen."

As he rejected twice by her he courts,

When she inclines his grievance to redress,
Her mood suspects, who with Devotion sports,
And fain would fathom her love's tenderness,
So inly doubting, still irresolute,
Whether returning was the wiser course,

Columbus made his word the purpose suit,

And thus bespoke the courier on his horse:

"Amigo mio, grateful to my ear
Thy kindly words, which like the echoes ring
Of angel's music happy dreamers hear
In slumber sweet but else unpromising.
Who sent thee hither, short be thy report;
For know, O friend, it is my firm resolve
To seek Assistance at another court
Where clearer minds perchance clear views evolve
In days instead of years thus lost to me."
Whereat the courier thus in tones of glee:

"Cheer up, Señor, they granted all you claimed,
Viceroy you shall be over lands and seas,
And have the titles and the rights you named,
And an armada sailing where you please.
Sir Quintanilla's message I convey
Whose eye was beaming as he charged me:
'Be off, and hurry, tell him what I say
I do empower'd by her Majesty.'"
The happiest man Columbus wheel'd around,
The courier sped to tell of his return;

At Santa Fé the Queen's command he found
To come to Court her royal will to learn;
Friend Quintanilla had yet more to tell
Of the great change but would nowise delay
The consummation, now that all pass'd well:
"To Court," he cried, "and God will lead the way."

This hour retired from a royal meal The Sovereigns interchange a serious word, The Queen her lord makes all her witchery feel, She sovereign lady of a sovereign lord; Too wise to press, too proud to make appeal, She speaks of what she dared and could afford: "No hazard thine, my King," she smiling adds, "I stand it all myself, and at my cost He shall embark; such emprise glory sheds On humble subjects and on crowned heads; For much I venture little, be it lost; A woman's rashness, if the worst occur, The world will mildly judge; not thus a king, Who to be great and wise, should never err As Xerxes did, who gave a fool his ring. Spain's interests embolden'd me to dare, Nor am I loath a hope of Gaul to crush; Castile alone shall all the hazards bear And Aragon shall have no cause to blush."

"Forbid it God, that Aragon withdraw
And let Castile the Quest sustain alone,"
The King exclaims; "thy will, my Queen, is law,

Our Thrones are twain, our sympathy is one; Whatever happen, be it loss or gain I crave the right my consort's risks to share, Henceforth the Quest shall be the Quest of Spain, The expedition be our common care. O, dearest, deepest, gentlest of thy kind, My loadstar ever, sweet companion thou, A dove in manner, a great Queen in mind, What made me greater, happier than the yow Of sacred Love, the bliss of which I taste, Since Valladolid my holy Mecca proved, When, as a pilgrim roaming thro' a waste, I met my princess, loved and was beloved? I had not much before thyself I had Of lofty spirit, adding soul to soul, And rushing onward, as a river fed By mountain torrents, thus we reach'd our goal.

"They tell of saints who, panoplied in white,
From light emerging on refulgent steeds,
In ancient battles mingled in the fight,
And for Hispania did unearthly deeds;
Unweapon'd thou, when warrior hearts did faint
And would to fear succumb, too weak to dare,
By dint of speech, inspired like a saint,
Didst brace our army and each loss repair.
Thus was Alhama kept and Baza taken,
And Malaga went down at thy approach;
Thus was Granada to her downfall shaken,
None doubting victory thy lip did vouch.—

Thy lip, my Queen, in this new enterprise,
Foretells success, and Spain shall search the seas,
Disdaining hazards bound to realize
Thy queenly hopes, Christopher's prophecies."

Hereat the King doth to his bosom press His gentle mate with marital delight, Resistless she the conjugal caress Responds with eyes of wifely tenderness. His lips meet hers to seal Affection's plight; Love's rapturous currents sweep thro' nerve and brain, The might of Nature rules the arts of life. The proudest Monarchs of punctilious Spain, Subdued by Passion, are but man and wife. The rapture over, gracious they await The mariner to welcome him anew; And, ushered, he permission hath to state His venture's end the Sovereign to imbue With faith his consort unreserved holds: Columbus, overfull of heartfelt joy. Ethereal fire in his speech infolds, Not unprepared the vestige to destroy Of Disbelief within the doubter's breast. And thus he speaks, as if by God's behest.

"A parchment blank, my Sovereigns, Time would roll
If man, inactive, suffer'd life to glide;
His daily tale of labor, tears and dole,
Of loss or gain, unspeaking cycles hide;
Heroic action, deeds of lustrous fame,

Unequal'd in result, the grave survive And force the world him greatest to proclaim Who, undeterred, dares for Greatness strive. Before the early sun the lower fields And valleys reaches with his bounteous light, He first the topmost crests and ranges gilds, The dwellers waking on aerial height; So Truth her secrets first to him reveals Who searching eagerly her counsel seeks, Above the snow-line her arcana steals, The vast surveying from sun-bathed peaks. Ah, well I realize the prophet's glee Not less than pain when, failing in his glow To make his people his great vision see, The spirit wasting in its overflow; He call'd for signs to prove his prophecy, The stars obeyed, the heavens fire sent, The mountain shook, the sea did witness bear, And Nature bade her every element The seer's inspiration to declare. Yet even then but few were the devout, Whose heads inclined in reverential awe, The faithful few, who in this world of doubt Prefer sweet manna to a food of straw. Impotent I those powers to invoke Tho' clear my sight and safe within I feel; I shall confirmed see the word I spoke, Shall of Time's Secrecy a secret steal Enriching man by doubling his domain, Above all sceptres raise the mace of Spain.

And worldly Conquest, not the least in view, My contemplation rates the lower goal, The world-redeeming mission you pursue, My Sovereigns, here, salvation of the soul, Will vaster nations than the Moor and Jew Life-giving save, once under Spain's control; A godly work, it being understood, Spain's triumphs be the triumphs of the rood. How slow mankind emerges from the dark, The dastard's hesitation in its face. The evelid quivering at each dazzling spark, Which earthward scintillates from skies of Grace. Great kingdoms unredeem'd in Error grope And billions unenlighten'd lived and died, They, living faithless, miss the star of Hope, Unholy here, hereafter unenskied.

"A dragon hydra-headed Error thrives, Her altars fume, a thousand millions kneel To homage Darkness, who this day survives The prophet's thunder, our Redeemer's zeal.

"Yea, Chemos lives, nor is Osiris dead,
Astoreth, Baal, and Apis in disguise
With hideous Moloch thirsting elsewhere fled
To claim of man infernal sacrifice;
Olympian phantoms scarce have cause to part
Unworship'd tho' the gods of Helias be;
As if yet undethroned in mind and heart,
Ouranus ruleth by his progeny;

In song Saturnus'makes his lightning fly,

The Ocean's billows Neptune's trident sways,
Blazing Apollo sweeps athwart the sky,

The nether world grim Pluto's frown obeys;
Hard metals bend on forges of Vulcan,

As arrow quick, is Mercury in speed,
Old Nature homages the rule of Pan,

When Mars is frowning battling nations bleed;
Minerva holds the wisdom of the brain,

The child of Venus wields the shaft of Love,
Of Ceres comes the harvest's waving grain,
Of Bacchus wine, Diana haunts the grove;

"Inferior gods each lake and river hold,
Each passion, gift, a god or goddess gives,
Rain comes of Pluvius, Boreas sends cold,
Immoral Jove his consort still deceives;
In favor thus that foolery of old,
Tho' dead in fact, in speech and fable lives.

"The sacred bard the Lebanon ascends,
The top of Horeb or of Carmel seeks,
Where, singing, he before Almighty bends,
Abhorring worship, that with incest reeks.
Why shun our bards to bathe in Hermon's dews,
Why not Golgotha sing in strains divine;
No Christian should invoke the heathen muse,
Now that the Star of Bethlehem did shine
When the Most High did his Messiah choose
In boundless Grace all sinners to enshrine.

Yea, broken is the night wherever lip Salvation utters in the name of Grace. If Wisdom err, if tempted Virtue slip. Undoomed he who once ador'd the face Of God's blest Lamb who bled for all the race. Alas! for them who never chance were given To kneel within the shadow of that tree Whose branches ramify throughout the heaven, With roots fed by the blood of Calvary. He knoweth best, who rules the Universe Why, undenied our Saviour's precious fruit, Because no man His message westward bears, Whole races should continue as the brute. With Eden closed, with Death in terror clad, Untaught, unfeeling, wallowing in vice; Yet men of heart, in pious circles bred, Conceive the wish to save at any price The unredeemed wherever they sojourn: And this, the mission for which I am born.

"A godlike work is his, who dries a tear
Or cheers a soul, or mollifies a sore;
Ah me! the mind's divinest lustre here
Should heal the wounds inhuman monsters tore.
I cannot see the agonies of man,
And suffer with the brute I see oppressed;
Deep sorrow fills me, that some beings can
Indulge a course so utterly unblessed.
Whoever they God sends me to regain
I bear them love,—Your Majesties may please—

I bear them love from laurel-crowned Spain, God's Kingdom grow, His votaries increase, And with it spread the blessings of your rule, That aftertimes may grateful ring your fame, When ages new, of higher wisdom full, Shall bend in awe before the Holiest Name!"

"It is our will," King Ferdinand declared,
"To aid the Quest and lay it in your hands,
Viceregal powers we ere this conferred
On you, the searcher of unsceptred lands;
Our notaries shall draw it black on white,
Define each clause before we set our seal
In confirmation of your lawful right
With men and ships as Admiral to deal
Of Spain's great Sovereignty on distant shores;
Three armed vessels shall equipp'd proceed,
Your will obeying which we thus endorse,
And pray Almighty may the emprise speed.



BOOK VIII.

ARGUMENT.

An immortal sorrow and an unchangeable world-career. How the proclaimed ban affected the Spanish Hebrews, who turn to their leaders for advice. These assemble at the Academy of Cordova for a solemn deliberation as to the course the exiles should adopt. The persons present and whence they came. Abarbanel presides. The consultation is opened with prayer by Hanoch, whose lineage is traced. The first speaker is Abraham Señor, who winds up an earnest discourse with a suggestion that provokes great displeasure. Aboab, the spiritual Chief of all the Spanish Jews, answers Abraham Señor in a manner that causes him to leave the Assembly in a state of indignation. The impression Aboab's exhortation made on his fellow-exiles. Arama, another light of his people, takes up the thread of Aboab's discourse and speaks in an admonitory, sorrowful, advisory and comforting tone. He is followed by many other leaders of note. At last Don Isaac Abarbanel rises to give the Assembly the benefit of his mature experience and wisdom, informing them at the same time that, owing to an unceremonious communication he had addressed to Isabella, he was obliged to save his head by flight. The painful moment of parting. The motto of the exiles. How they went forth in myriads and what they endured. The irrefutable lesson of contemporaneous events.

Pray O, my soul! that He who mercy shows,
And Sorrow sends His faithful here to try,
Thy strain inspire, while I dwell on woes
Which in man's annals frame the tragedy;
That race of Jobs, whom Sinai's Words inflame,
The world's great martyrs, since their work began,
Whom hundred ages tried and found the same,
Say, how did they confront the cruel ban

(207)

Iberia's flinty Rulers did proclaim,
As tho' the Hebrew was no child of man;
He brother to the Saviour they extolled,
The meek Messiah—madness of the Time—
Whose tears of sympathy profusely rolled,
Still suffers martyrdom in many a clime.

As on that day when frighted horsemen sped
Thro' Susa's gates, the deathful brief in hand,
The fearful edict tears and horror spread
Among the Hebrews of the Persian land,
So first astonish'd when the tidings came,
The banish'd Jews upsent a myriad cry,
Then, turning to their chiefs of honor'd name,
Implored their counsel with a tearful eye,
But found their sages dumb, their champions lame,
While Israel's God was silent in the sky.

But thou, Abarbanel, devout and wise,
Unable to avert the stern decree,
Dost high above the frighten'd masses rise,
Resolved to face the dark calamity
With resignation, as befits the great;
Thy missives go the wisest to invite
To Cordova in order to debate
What course the exiles should adopt in flight,
For fly they must, as pestilential breath
Their land of birth endear'd by thousand ties,
Or die the outlaw's ignominious death;
Or, hiding faith beneath hypocricies,

Be scented by the blood-hounds of that Court Fell Torquemada sways with fiendish ire, Who on suspicion or some vague report To Torture thousands gave and hellish fire.

At famous Cordova the leaders meet, The known and learned thither come apace, To silent quarters straightway they retreat, The perils weighing of a martyr'd race; Some from Zamora and Tortosa come, From Cadiz and Salamanca others hail, Valencia or Malaga some call their home, Nor doth Granada and Barcelona fail, Like old Toledo, delegates to send; From Seville and Almeria many more Accredited before Don Isaac stand, Reputed chiefs of standing or of lore, Such as would anywhere respect command, Long-bearded sages in all eighty-four, Who would the senate grace of any land, Adorn the Grand Synhedrium of yore.

No word of cheer is breathed; sad faces all,

The converse flows but in an undertone,
As one hears frequent at a funeral,

Or at the death-bed ere the soul is gone.

Not thus in previous times that hall appeared

Where throngs did gather teachers wise to hear,
Since Cordova Spain's Hebrew leaders reared,

Whom after-ages thankfully revere,

And many present, whom no prospect cheered, In early years deep wisdom gleaned here.

Nine other envoys at the latest hour From Saragossa thither found their way, When all unanimous invest with power Abarbanel to act or yet delay The vital consultation, lest too late Some chief arrive to share in the debate. And he the star to whom for light they turn With feeling answers: "Why delay my friends? Our exiles should our counsel timely learn Before they scatter as the ban commands. Delay, delay, what gain we by delay! The cruel Sovereigns issued the decree, Too well ye know in Spain we dare not stay, Unless we feign the foe's Christianity To be the dungeon's or the pyre's prey, The food of Torquemada's deviltry. No, brothers, Hope is gone, and we must go, I pleaded strongly but no heart was moved; With Romish conquest Wrong and Hatred grow, Rome plann'd our misery, which Spain approved. Yea, go we must, but whither, ah, my friends! Withersoever we our faces turn No welcome for us in God's ample lands; Where other races lightly comfort earn The Jew is willing for his bread to toil, The humblest offices and tasks to do, To thrive by handicraft or till the soil,

The banish'd myriads wisely to advise
Ye are assembled, leaders of the day;
But, ere ye speak, let the Assembly rise,
While honor'd Hanoch will for Guidance pray."

"Our God in heaven," Hanoch's prayer rings, "Submissive to Thy Will we bow our head, We fail to penetrate the end of things Thy Wisdom shapes, and, tho' our blood be shed, We trust in Thee whose Name we thus confess, We love Thee, Father, but our heart is sad, O, help Thy faithful in their dire distress And lead us safely thro' this change we dread! Our counsels guide at this momentous hour, When earthly succor hostile men deny, The waves of Hatred threaten to devour Jeshurun's renmant sunk in agony; Yet if this anguish be our wholesome cure, If Israel's sorrow Thy great Will decreed, Sustain us in our trials to endure, Sustain us, Father, when for Thee we bleed, Sustain us, Helper, whom with awe we seek; Thy Wisdom lead us whom we praise alone, Thy Wisdom guide us when to-day we speak

None worthier than Hanoch to invoke

The Highest God who centuries before,
When Sura's school Arabia's Caliph broke,

Of Thy Salvation, Lord, Thy Will be done."

With honor crowned Hanoch's ancestor.

This Moses, son of Hanoch, first a slave,
Ransom'd at Cordova with Hebrew gold,
In sackcloth clad, but of deportment grave,
Did once at the Academy unfold,
While Head and school some knotty point revolved,
Such scholarship, a mind so keen and wise,
That, having modestly the problem solved,
He saw the Dean unhesitating rise
And call: "Yon slave our God did hither send
To give us light, let him our master be;
This school hereafter to his wisdom bend,
He Chief henceforth of this Academy."

Thus Moses rose and by the Caliph's grace

He shone and taught, his people's princely Head,
Spain's Nagid he, a glory to his race.

And ever since his noble offsprings led
The Jews of Cordova, down to the day
On which Abarbanel a Hanoch chose
In honor of his lineage there to pray
Who once from bondage to distinction rose.
His invocation Sadness sadder made,
As Night grows fearful when the widow moans,
The elders sighing while good Hanoch pray'd,
Each bosom heaving with repressed groans;
So doth the sea disturbed from beneath
In swelling surges toward the heavens rise,
And so doth one within the grasp of Death

His soul's departure hurry to the skies.

And who that figure upright, tall and gray,
Straight as a pine, the shining snow on head,
A settled man who doth no cares betray
And looks as one among Spain's noblest bred?

"Abraham Señor," the whisper round the board From lip to lip runs as he takes the floor; Him, known as Andalusia's Hebrew lord, Arbarbanel invites: "We hear, Señor," When he: "Señores," opens his discourse, "First he be thank'd who call'd us here to meet Before our haters the grim ban enforce And do the deed the times will not repeat But, looking backward, will this age arraign And judge it darkest of all ages past, Stamp Shame on the escutcheon of Spain, And think her worthy of Gomorrah's blast; For come what may, should Sodom's age return The years will scarce a Torquemada bring, Or other fiend mankind alive to burn, Nor Queen as pious-mad, nor such a King. Could one the current of events foresee, Forecast the changes later days evolve, He could ordain unerring what should be, With Foresight fashioning each new resolve. Time was when Ferdinand did need a friend To urge his suit before the maid whose will I largely prompted to bestow her hand On him, who woo'd the Heiress of Castile. I had the favors of the royal bride

And favor'd the alliance, feeling sure,
That, being Jewish on his mother's side,*
He would no Hebrew suffer to endure
Inhuman outrage as we oft sustained.
The outcome proved my reasoning unsound,
The Church not we, by the alliance gained,
The Church of Rome, who does the world astound;
A reign of terror hers for Jew and Moor,
A hell on earth with hell-hounds on the chase;
The Holy Office doth Islam abhor
But strives to extirpate the Hebrew race.—

"Now trump and herald blazon'd the decree
That sends adrift a people free of guilt,
A people hurled into misery
Whose blood for naught the Church too often spilt.
Of woman born, accessible to pain,
Beloved and loving, feeling every sting
Mortality endures, Spain's Queen and King
Surpass the Vandal in their high disdain
Of common Justice, blinded by a creed
That robs and roasts mankind in name of Grace,
And, could it harmonize the will and deed,
Would the unbaptiz'd from this earth efface.

"Such are our foes, who grant no space to stand, No harbor for a night, no spot, no grave,

^{*}The wife of Don Frederic Henriquez, Admiral of Castile and natural grandfather of Ferdinand, was the beautiful Columba, a Jewess.

Who chase a people from their native land, Without a respite, which we humbly crave. Yea, not a year, and not the half of this, The Crown allows the victims it expels To sell or barter their commodities; No gold nor silver shall he take who sells; The stores are full, the markets overfull, The Jew must sell, must sell at any rate, I saw a vineyard offer'd for a mule, And saw the muleteer still hesitate; Why should one buy, unless he be a fool, The things that will be his, if he but wait? For into exile who can carry more Than what a knapsack and two hands may hold. The dame will rather clasp the babe she bore Than bear her treasured heirloom left unsold; The son will east aside his precious store To shoulder hapless parents weak and old. The moon of May is rounding in the blue, July expires with our hope in Spain, Delay means death to the unbaptiz'd Jew, And shelter given him brings mortal pain.— As one aboard, where fire spreads apace, The flames determined with resistance braves, And not until he meets Death face to face, Seeks refuge in the life-devouring waves, So we, made outlaws, must this country flee, Flee Danger home to meet her like abroad, As pirates hunted on a stormy sea With none to help us but our Only God.

"We should advise! were Solomon here to-day His ample wisdom would despairing shrink; It is the Highest Power none may stay, Who keeps us trembling on Destruction's brink; The precipies inspires with dismay The stoutest heart impelled thus to sink; It were but little worse if Spain this day Said: 'Let all Jews the cup of hemlock drink.' For one I say, since I am free to speak, Lead on the strongest who can hardship stand, But lure not forth the aged and the weak To perish on the highways or the strand, Disheartening the sturdy who, unfraught, Might reach some haven and begin anew To raise a homestead earned slow or bought, While water makes no Christian of the Jew. Engraved, as on the tablets was the Law, Which God Himself did with His finger draw, Is loval faith in me, my soul is true; I never waver'd to confess my creed, No, never Faith and Honor to defend, And those of mine whom I as parent breed And such as willing to my wishes bend, I urge the spirit of our Law to heed. Yet in all matters Hebrews are but men And cherish wife and child and home withal, And, running upward toward three score and ten, One should untrembling wretchedness forestall.— Whatever wealth be mine the half I spare

To ease the burden of the banish'd poor;

Let those go forth the martyr's meed to share,
Whose vigor spurns them trials to endure;
My children go, I hold their action free,
Go all who may, except the old and frail;
Or would ye rather hundreds rotten see,
Unburied sires filling mead and vale,
Feeding the wolf's, the vulture's gluttony?
Of those who stay, Señores, I am one;
No blame of mine if I this precious price
For favors pay, beholden to the Throne;
The Queen exacted this great sacrifice,
Else harder much would be the sudden blow,
And banishment would come without reprieve
To whelm our kindred in a gulf of woe,
I bought the respite, will not God forgive?"

As when a legion burning to be led
Against an enemy they dare defy,
Their shrinking chief envisage vengeance-mad,
Who false or dastard, urges them to fly,
So ninety faces toward the speaker turned
Astonishment or anger in each mien,
Among them one, who like a North-light burned,
A noble countenance of complexion keen;
So he on Carmel shone, when Heaven's flame
His offering consumed, while all aghast
The priests of Baal, smitten in their shame,
Fell struck and wither'd by Almighty's blast.
Him duty bade defend his high domain,
None more than Isaac Aboab had right,

The Hebrew's spiritual Head of Spain,
Barefaced Treason in his camp to fight.
The Chief's high age, his locks as white as snow,
His beard descending in a mighty fall,
His trembling words, deliberate and slow,
Suasive, piercing, yet devoid of gall,
Awaken Reverence, drawing long applause
As, standing loaded with full eighty years,
He sends his wisdom to sustain the cause,
To him as holy as the One he fears,

"Your voice, Señor, reveals the mind you nurse, Unhealing drugs the medicine you give, A blessing coupled with a trebled curse Is Rest secured by Loss naught may retrieve.— The strong should part with Weakness left behind, The young should flee and leave the old alone, The frail should in Dishonor comfort find. And Age forswear the worship of the One. What sires they, who would thus back remain, While God to sanctify their scions go, In life's decline the hypocrites of Spain; What sages they, who would their all forego To roast in fire or decay in pain, Preferring Falsehood to a martyr's woe! Unholy course unworthy of a race Almighty chose the watchmen of His Light To guard man's heritage for brighter days And spread God's Truth reveal'd on Horeb's height. Six days did see the Providential plan

With Beauty rise, in perfect Glory stand;
Six thousand years are not enough for man
To guess the Wisdom of the Master's hand;
Yet for the soul that yearning seeks to see
A glimpse of Truth, while groping here beneath,
There are, beside the star-paved canopy,
The ills of Life the mysteries of Death,
The world of evil lowering the low,
The flood of years with dawn of golden times,
To raise her Godward by each trying blow,
On stern Adversity she skyward climbs.

"In cycles backward greater men than we Endured agonies for Thought and Creed, Of martyr'd saints a brilliant galaxy Our tale adorns, none oftener did bleed Than Israel, none readier than she, Dear Zion's daughter in her mourning weed. My soul at stake what perils shall I reck, I close mine eyes wherever God ordains; Is there aught blacker than the raven's black? The Jew's great glory is his life of pains. I witness'd ills and bore a thousand cares, The poignard's point assassins aim'd at me; I pass'd unhart thro' seven massacres, Oppression bent my frame, my soul is free. And free, O, brothers, free is Hebrew blood, Asmonean leaders rise in this our plight, Undaunted rise, ye faithful brotherhood, The weak within, the foe without to fight;

The monk is up the wavering to lure,

Let none unwarned fall into the snare,
Inform the rich, assist the needy poor,

To brace our exiles be our sacred care.

"Lead on, lead on, for whitherward we move The fiercest haters of our ancient race We leave behind, a land devoid of love A hierarch domineers with Moloch's face. I blush for shame Desertion to discuss. As if the sons unlike their fathers were, Who stood the torments of Antiochus Disdaining falsely by his gods to swear. Immortal Eleazar was not young When him the Syrian flay'd until he died, Mattathias' vigor was wellnigh unstrung, When with his whelps he Syria defied; And widow'd Hannah, who that Pagan saw Her six young orphans fiendishly destroy For loathing food forbidden by our Law, And who unvielding gave her seventh boy To cruel Death, was faithful and no more, A Jewess on whose life no records dwell, Because there lived thereafter as before Such worthy daughters in old Israel.—

[&]quot;The cross or ban before us set to choose, Señor, there be no question who should go; Are we a nation in our tenets loose, Obsequious slaves to each new Pharaoh?

Thank God the roads are open let us flee Infernal horrors thickening at home, Some northward wander, others take the sea, Disperse in faith beneath Almighty's dome, Who will your anguish and devotion see, And in His Grace let our Messiah come. Whoever loves, whoever hath a friend, A hoary sire or a feeble dame, On horseback mount, or lead them by the hand, The young the old shall help, the strong the lame. The world shall wonder when our masses rise. As never hitherto in ages gone, To offer up the grandest sacrifice Of self in triumph to the Holy One. A day of glory that, tho' tears will flow, When bending humbly under God's Decree, Our exiles will their earthly rest forego, Submissive to the noblest ancestry, That graced the annals of the human kind. Unearthly kingdoms are the Jew's domain, Sky-blest we go, a curse remains behind, Our tearful going be the curse of Spain."

As on the day when thwarted by a sea,
With dashing foemen storming in the rear,
The slaves of Egypt in despondency
Heard from On High: "Advance and do not fear."
And, full of faith, relying on their Chief,
The billows breasted for the safer shore,
Convinced the crossing would insure Relief

And break the slavish yoke forevermore, So this Assembly, as by magnet lured The iron filings toward the horseshoe fly, The sage environ, of their sorrows cured, Vowing like him Temptation to defy, Endure the woes the sires had endured And either faithful live or faithful die Spontaneous blessings shower on his head. Unanimous they cheer him, all but one, Who leaves resentful, in his visage red: In conscience smitten, Abraham is gone. Quick stood another with an eye of scorn, You would have thought Isaiah rose again Judea's downfall in a dirge to mourn, A leader, too, among the Jews of Spain, Arama he, of godly parents born, Who claims attention by this ardent strain.

[&]quot;One more deserter ye have yonder seen,"
Arama pointed to the closing door,
"Who fled our Council with a heart of spleen,
Who would be God's and Satan's servitor;
No star hath faded of ethereal sheen,
His passing loses us no less nor more
Than lurid glare, an errant meteor;
A world of loyalty, a stream of sighs,
As tho' his bosom glows with pious glee,
A generous gift, and moisture in the eyes,
And all wound up with rank Apostasy.
That was no voice of Solace nor of Truth,

No balm to soothe a heart of sorrow full, No voice to brace up Age nor counsel Youth, You heard the voice of Torquemada's tool.

"Beware, O, sons of Judah! had ye read The signs of Providence in earlier days, When, less begrudged, less our blood was shed, Unenvied we our mission fill'd and place; But prone his wealth and tinsel to display, Ambitious with the noble and the great To vie in luxuries and splendors gay, Many a Hebrew, covetous of state, Forbidden intermingling cringing sought With Gothic nobles, sacrificing blood And Faith and Holiness, and never thought, That less his daughter was than Mammon woo'd. And Mammon, lustful Mammon, well ye know, Hath bred us haters wolfish in their greed; By him enkindled horrid pyres glow, Upon his altars Jewish victims bleed; For Church and State pay homage to that ghoul Whose thirst transforms men into bloody beasts, He buys the body first and then the soul, And Spain obeys the blackest of his priests. Ay, overmuch we serv'd him in the past, Instead of God, we had that field in view, Who conjured on our heads the dreadful blast, His gifts are baneful, venom to the Jew. Things great and dear no gold can buy on earth Wherein the lowly may eclipse the high;

God's Faith and Love, Nobility of birth,
Sky-granted light, no earthly hoards can buy.
Such is our heritage, let nations frown,
Destroy they cannot whom Almighty guards,
"Tis He allotted us the martyr's crown;
The bad He punisheth, the good rewards.

"Yea, sons of Sorrow, let your heart not fail
That throbs enkindled by the purest blood;
Our sires stood it, weather we the gale,
Our story flows, of tears and gore a flood,
Of mothers slain, of slaughter'd babes and maids;
Bless Him who chose us to be thus alone
The wearers of the wreath that never fades,
The sovereign subjects of the Highest Throne.

"Who counts the millions vegetating here
With birthright trampled for a bed and meal?
The multitudes are yok'd by force or fear,
And even Science falters in her zeal,
If Truth endanger idols old or dear,
Her bolder thought in clearness to reveal;
But when, since Abram chopp'd his father's gods,
Since Rachel stole her sire's teraphim,
Did Hebrews yield to menaces or rods,
Or slight their faith to please a tyrant's whim?
Enslaved the Jew, immovable his mind,
The lion's den, the thumbscrew he defies,
He would not worship idols with the blind,
In jail he rots and in slow fires dies;

He shall now learn to leave dear homes behind,

He will and must bring this great sacrifice.

Much found have they, who Life's elixir found,

Who know the thing superior to all things,

Who, bound in body, are in soul unbound,

Who reverence none except the King of kings;

Them wound who may, invulnerable as air,

Their spirit's might disdaining iron bars,

Unconquer'd here, unconquer'd everywhere,

Unmatched great, enduring with the stars.

Obscure their tale, whose lives the legends paint

As holy men, who raved and fasted too,

The fable celebrates the martyr'd saint,

The world is teeming with the martyr'd Jew.

"Like other exiles, brothers, I shall mourn
The loss of home, associations dear;
A son of Spain, in Andalusia born,
The grandsire's tomb, and cherish'd kinsfolk near;
A sky so sunny, breezes soft and sweet,
And Nature's bounties shower'd from the skies,
Ah, nowhere will the roving exile meet,
In Spain we lose our earthly paradise.

"Yet what of that, Probation is our span
Of durance in this withering guise we wear,
To live a hero and to die a man
The Hebrew ventured, and the Jew shall dare,
And ye, O, leaders do the fire fan
In those who, suffering, Judah's banner bear!"

Still other voices in succession flow, Still unabated Ardor stirs each heart. The speech is fire, for the speakers glow, Combined they cry, "Depart we all, depart." Renowned they, who speak with might and main, Among them Quikatilla towers high, And Yabetz, Zakut, famous lights of Spain, All urge departure and forget to sigh. But useless waste Combustion to enhance, When all is fire, burning to the core; The fort defended needed no defense In thousand storms, will stand five thousand more. Yet the they said the best they had to say, Unsolved the problem seem'd, for none could tell The wisest method or the safest way Till thou hast spoken, wise Abarbanel.

"Well have ye justified our highest claim
The chosen of the chosen here to be,
Yea, chosen long to wear the badge of Shame,
Yet chosen sure, ay, chosen martyrs we,
Thus ever whelmed, ever bent in grief,
Red spectres hovering above our head;
Faith be our comfort, Death is our relief,
Why fear the grave when life is fraught with dread?
No, tight our heirloom hold our days are brief,
Our God unknown, ay me! the world is mad.
Jehovah yield, that Moloch's rule prevail?
The madman died, who thought this would occur;
Why not the moon, why not the sun assail,

Why not from Azure constellations tear?
Wipe out a people who resisted Rome
When continents submitted to her yoke,
A race that broke the neck of Heathendom
And thro' whom God to all the races spoke,
A race whose course the wisest fills with awe,
As if the Universe reveal'd to them
Those awful mysteries no vision saw,
Till prophets dream'd in old Jerusalem,
Nor Spain hath might nor any power far.
Old Rome is dead, the canker eats new Rome;
In dazzling splendor, graven on a star,
Our fame eradiates from Heaven's dome.

"I say to Sorrow: 'Come and fill my breast And cleanse my frailties with thy chastening rod. I rather forfeit my sublunar rest Than shirk a duty I owe to my God. His Will be done, who ever sees both ends, Ordains our being and directs our course; We knowing Him and what His Law commands, Shall never bow before unheavenly Force. I know my flesh decays and wrinkles fast, I know that Earth reclaims her share in me, I know that dust descendeth to the dust, And know that life means pain and misery; But well I know, that God is ever just, Of all the good and just the Justest He. When seasons change the Autumn seems decay, When north-winds blow the life-congealing breath,

Cold Winter nurses yet the buds of May
And Flora sleeps, for Nature knows no death.
The atom made when Time her flight began
Imperishable lasts as rock and wave,
The things done here continue with the sun,
The soul receives her meed beyond the grave;
Devoid of Faith I could this woe not bear,
How could I honor those who call'd me forth
Into a world where men each other tear
And Love seems colder than the frozen North?

"Now, whither go? ye ask, and who shall lead? Each flock their leader follow where he goes; One help the other in the hour of need, And ease the burden of a brother's woes; Let Faith and Charity our exiles guide, The monks oppose who tempt the poor to stay; And wise it were the masses to divide To lead them timely on their chosen way.— Suggest a prudent use of humble wear, Lest, eager to preserve some gorgeous gear The outlaw'd wanderers the greedy stir To bloody acts with none to interfere. Unprepossess'd am I for any shore, Nor would I any region safe commend, Yet should I shun the strand of Afric's Moor, Who, lawless-wild, is not the Hebrew's friend, Upon the seas as pirate thirsts for gore, On strangers on his coast lays murderous hand.— To aid the poor our wealthy need no spurn,

What can they do with wealth they cannot move,
Nor into golden coin or silver turn,
Or load the shoulder while they homeless rove?
Let those who go, the danger being great,
On wonders count, for wonders never cease;
Wherever Faith, there opens Heaven's gate,
Wherever Hope, there is a world of peace.
Yea, to your uttermost your wills exert
Till few are left unwilling to depart,
For it behooves you, friends, to be alert
And never watch relax, until ye start.

"Right glad were I your labors to divide, Nay, happy, could unhazardous I lead A myriad into Banishment as guide, When guidance means the triumph of our creed; But, whether wise or no, I durst address A scathing censure, which perforce will sting The cruel authors of our new distress— It vengeance conjures on Spain's Queen and King. Our Keeper slumbers not, I wrote thus plain, Whose Justice, fire-winged, descends in time, And evil-breeding will alight on Spain, To leave a burning curse for every crime: For better were it never to be born Than bathe in tears and blood, and be the cause Of horrid outrage, wounds by devils torn, For naught diviner than a monk's applause. Did Egypt's host not perish in the sea, Sennacherib's legions not in death congeal?

Was Haman's end not black ignominy, Did Rome not perish with her might of steel?— O, who will blame an aching heart that sighs Abhorrent of the hand that ruthless smites. Or blame the victim writhing in agonies, Who, cut and stung, the bloody hangman bites! Be Patience godly, Silence precious gold, Both are Dishonor when a man should speak In Honor's name, why leave a truth untold, On dire foemen why no vengeance wreak?— Accursed Spain indebted to our thrift For treasure lavish'd in her endless wars. May never thou in peace thy ensigns lift, Thy faith be flame, thy priests inquisitors. The day shall come when in that self-same hell, For Hebrews kindled by a cursed hand, Thou wilt bewail the reign of Isabel, Bequeathing thee that hellish firebrand Which, unextinguished, thy marrow shall Consume, and blast the splendors of thy land; Then will the Hebrew rise and singing tell His people's woe, who nowhere found a friend!

"Short hours are mine, within a day or two
My message will the heartless Monarchs reach,
Who will resent the curses of the Jew,
And would my age a gory lesson teach,
If I, imprudent, flying hence defer
To give my head the executioner.
Thus close we, brothers, ere the sable veils

Of Twilight heave in sight with night arrear. Part we in Hope, the Grief the heart assails,
Part we in Faith, here ends not our career.
Arise, Jeshurun, deathless race arise,
Thy light shall shine, and kings obey thy word;
Cheer up and strive, for thine are earth and skies,
The banner thine of the Supremest Lord!

"Thy foes shall vanish, like the molten snow,
Their scions blush, who are thy cause of tears,
The world shall brighten, thou shalt have no foe,
And see thy sons extoll'd above the peers
Of mighty empires, and man shall know,
That powers granted from celestial spheres
No earthly might can frustrate here below!
Yea, Gog and Magog, now enthroned high,
As crippled Dagon, will downtrodden bray,
It is our lot to suffer and to sigh,
The night be ours, our sons shall see the day.

"O! fair Iberia, an Eden meant to be
By Him whose Bounty dress'd thee like a wreath,
As from a charnel I thy havens flee,
Thy frown is fearful, pestilence thy breath;
The Hebrew's curse, the Arab's misery,
Once dear to both, their Valley now of Death.
Farewell, poor land, I see thy fearful night,
The Great Avenger will our prayers hear,
Thy lustre wither and thy glories blight,
And blood will flow for every exile's tear!"

The elders rose and, like a tilial brood
Of loving sons, who honor fatherhood,
Seeing Abarbanel was bound to go,
In silence gather'd and in sorrow stood
Around him, overcome with speechless woe,
Till Aboab gave comfort in a glow
Of heartfelt utterance no heart withstood;
These words he spoke, his eyes did overflow.

"And are we hopeless orphans that ye bend In grief and fear, as if our God was weak. And no Salvation could His faithful send Or lead them heavenward thro' deserts bleak? Ay, rugged is the road allotted us, And thorny pathways branch out everyway, Yet, as thro' death the just to Heaven pass, And as the darkest hour precedes the day. So ever Israel in his Godward flight Such be His Will, whom we the One proclaim Thro' darkness passes to unfading light. Thro' deathful trials to a deathless fame. March forth and strive with undiminish'd zeal, The heavens have balm all mortal ills to soothe. The flesh be subject to the spirit's will, And life be sacrificed for God and Truth!"

"For God and Truth I" resign'd the elders cry, Old friends embrace, the sentiment is keen, The glistening tear hangs sparkling in the eye, The sun descends on this pathetic scene. Well done your tasks, brave chiefs, who wrought it well.

When, glowing inward, unrelenting ye.

The bloodhounds fought of Torquemada's hell,

Whose baits were made by Lie and Perjury,
Insuring heaven to such as would submit.

To holy drops at the baptismal fount,

And sending such to the infernal pit.

As homaged Truth reveal'd on Sinai's Mount.

Ah, triumph dear, alas! the time did find
The myriads ready Banishment to face
With burning hearts and anguish in the mind,
With Death in sight and Horror in his trace.

Brief records theirs, yet much they tell in brief,
How Plague and Famine, Rape and Murder slew,
Great numbers flying, how they came to Grief
Unpitied by an age nor kind nor true,
Who one in Hatred, mad in its belief,
Combined to slay the remnant of the Jew.
But He on high did otherwise ordain,
And, like Himself, His Will endures for aye,
The Jew is there, and there is crumbling Spain,
He spread in vigor, she the nations' play;
She boasts of glories, but her boast is vain,
A tool of Night, she fears the rising day.



BOOK IX.

ARGUMENT.

THE Ocean's mystery. The people of Palos watch the departure of the armada and pray for its return. They, who helped Columbus to overcome interposed difficulties. The indications of impending trouble with the crew. Their dejection on losing sight of the Canary Islands. Luis de Torres, whose wonder-tales divert the crew. The legend of Roderick the Goth. The wizards who guard the entrance to the magic tower built by Alcides. The mystery of the tower and Roderick's determination to solve it. Urbino's warning unheeded by the King. Florinda's outrage, and the resolution of her parents to avenge their daughter's shame. Columbus on Florinda and her tragic fate. An awful meteor bursts in the air. Ruiz presages evil, unless the armada returned. Columbus disposes of his evil prophecy in a manner that embitters the pilot. Clouds mistaken for land. Ruiz attempts to foster discontent among the sailors. The minstrel tells, how Roderick proceeded to explore the secret of the tower. The gate opens at a touch of the King's hand. The terrific figure that bars the entrance to the main edifice. They enter and the secret is learned. Don Roderick and his suit fly in terror from appalling sights. Nature in convulsions. Toledo is shaken to her foundation. The King's terrific dream. Urbino advises Roderick to close the tower. The King's advance to do so. An eagle sets the magic structure on fire which is consumed in no time. What followed. The lesson Columbus draws from the strange tale.

Hall Ocean, undiminish'd primal flood,Unnumber'd cycles o'er thy waters run,Ere, brooding on thy deep, Almighty GodFrom Chaos hove the wonder of the sun

Who feeds this orb and cheers the son of clod. And countless lives that crawl or bound thereon. Stupendous in thy grandeur, vast and pure, The Spirit who thy mighty bosom stirs Intended thee with Azure to endure, A rolling mirror of the Universe; Thou, witness of the hoary things that were Since Time is on her wing, and things that be, Wilt see the fruitage pregnant ages bear, The atom knowing and the Galaxy; Were speech thy gift who would thy tale not crave, Not learn the story never utter'd here! Yea, worlds, great Ocean, buried in thy wave. Had on this planet run their long career, Before man rose, created for the grave, To long and sigh for some immortal sphere. No eye beheld what thy abysses hide Of wither'd things uneaten by the worm, Of bones decayed, of creatures petrified, Armadas sunk in battle or in storm: But on thy shores who, seeing, cannot see New powers rise and, warring, claim control Of empires thy generosity

Left unsubmerged by thy whelming roll!

Who counts the battles waged on thy shore?

Thy angry billows mix with mortal blood,

Thy sacred sands are often stain'd with gore;

Yet unpolluted thou, majestic flood,

As ether purifying the impure;

Thy touch is thrilling and thy breath is bliss.

The Eden where the righteous rest secure

Betwixt the sun must be and thy abyss;

With sky and stars thy glories will endure,

Thou source of life and sweet felicities.

"Sail on, adventurous mariners, sail on, May friendly winds and kindly spirits guard Your going out, until ye light upon The realms ye seek, that fame be your reward." Thus Juan Perez prayerfully cries, While men and women, crowded on the shore, The fading vessels watching, strain their eyes, Believe to see them still, but see no more The "Santa Maria," altho' the largest she That bore the Admiral and wore his flags; The most commodious of the sailing three. She but a while behind the others lags, Then all is lost to sight and tears are shed For dear ones gone by dear ones left at home, These mourning those, as if among the dead; The mystic West, so long the sailor's doom Both Palos and Huelva fills with dread: The towns and neighborhood are sunk in gloom, So many houses miss the ruling head, The child unanswer'd asks: "Will father come?"

Had ye not holpen, Pinzons, generous brave,The great discoverer to pave his way,When royal mandates scant assistance gave,Who knows, how long he waiting had to stay

Before the people, hating the decree To back an emprise thitherto untried, Would yield to Force or bow to Royalty, Whom sullen they at first all help denied. Now, all is well, Columbus, Patience won Her triumph over Hindrance and Delay; Thyself an Admiral, a page thy son, A squadron thy directions to obey, Naught else remains, since westward on the sea Thy caravels progress with bulging sails, Thy goal to reach but the discovery, Now that at last unfought thy will prevails. Unfought! not yet, alas! it shall not be, Wherever thou, some adversaries rise, Or base Ingratitude or Dastardy, Or some impostor to contend thy prize.

But who, thou being undisputed Chief of all
The crews and pilots under thy command,
Durst thee defiance bid, great Admiral,
Thus on the Ocean stream afar from land?
First Rascon and Quintero, loath to find
Their "Pinta" and themselves by force controlled,
Gave early token of an evil mind
While yet on shore among the crews enrolled,
Fomenting tumults to be left behind,
And, unsuccessful, on the Ocean galled
The generous Chief, still planning to defeat
The expedition by unmanly wiles;
Thus "Pinta's" broken rudder held the fleet

For nineteen days at the Canary Isles.

And when at length they westward stood from shore,
When Ferro's outlines faded from the eye
And every league still far and farther bore
The fleet with nothing round but sea and sky,
The stoutest seamen felt their courage shrink,
Pale faces turned rearward full of pain,
With folded hand some on their knees did sink
Beseeching Heaven to see their homes again,
While others did of naught but ruin think
And self-compassioned cried: "Farewell, O, Spain!"

These morbid symptoms will, Columbus knew, Ere long assume the aspect he did fear, Unless Diversion could divert the crew, Beguile the timid, and the gloomy cheer. Thus Luis de Torres, a Maranno Jew, A gifted bard, who singing drew the tear, The Admiral requested tales to tell Of battles or adventures to beguile The tedious hours, while winds the ships propel, The idle seamen brooding all the while On airy bubbles thoughtless fears beget; Since Reason fail'd their terrors to allay It wiser seem'd their appetites to whet For something new, that would the feeling sway; He would the service enter as a debt, And in due time the effort well repay.— Luis de Torres answers: "Av, Señor; The coming eve I shall unfold my skill;

The tale may be of Christian, Jew or Moor, Of grief or woe, in Aragon or Castile; What matters this? I have my harp with me And burning anguish smoulders in my breast, I saw my people's great calamity, But wanted strength to suffer with the best; My lot is sad, and sadness is my breath, I hate to live thus tortured in the soul, I hate this world and longing wait for Death, And if I sing or play my tune is dole. Yea, strange, Señor, I hail with joy the vast, The monster of the deep I fear much less, Much less the whirlpool and the sweeping blast, Than monstrous priests, who grace and love profess, Degrade mankind to glut their wolfish lust, The guiltless outrage and the weak oppress. Ay, sing I will, but strike the sadder chord Of Love in bondage, Honor driven mad, Astonish'd armies smitten by the sword, Of Guilt and Vengeance by Dishonor fed. Not mine the lay the amorous troubadour, Great ladies pleasing, sang long years ago, If there be truth in legendary lore, I still prefer the tale of real woe.—

"The sun is sinking yonder down the sea,
Methinks the waters and the Azure burn,
He goes adown, Señor, and so do we,
But he will rise and we might yet return.
Avaunt, pale Fear, why dread the peaceful sleep,

That knows no day, why fear the dark in sight? Come Death on land or come he on the deep,
A welcome angel he who says: 'Good night.'—
Pardon, Señor, if I awhile withdraw,
Attuned, I never touch'd a string in vain,
My instrument is out of tune, I know,
With setting night I shall be up again;
The chords shall sigh, vibrating to and fro,
And you will hear the wonder-tale of Spain."

Now Twilight settles and the hour grows dim, The rougher eastwind softens to a breeze, The hour hath come to sing the vesper hymn; The seamen sang, then came an hour of peace; And from above, mysterious deep as He, Whose brilliant constellations one by one Sprung from the bosom of Immensity, The hosts of heaven underneath His Throne. Their distant glimmer on the waters throw, The boatswain speaks in a subdued tone, A mystic silence thrills the soul with awe. And as when straying children catch a sound Not unfamiliar to the greedy ear, But unexpected on deserted ground, Surprised startle and with pleasure hear The dulcet strain that conquers every fear, So at the notes the mariners astound, As Luis de Torres breaks the solemn night; He strikes the harp, his touch imparts a thrill Of sacred awe and spiritual delight

To all aboard, who hear and wonder still,
Whether a merman with some dark design
Attempted thus the senses of the crew,
Or whether human were those sounds divine,
The man a minstrel of the rarest few.
And as the tune is follow'd by a strain
Of rhythmic speech, recounting woes of old,
The seamen knew he was a son of Spain
And listen'd gladsome while this tale was told,

"Five hundred knights in blazing armor shone,
Like stars they stood, amid them, as the sun,
Don Roderick sate high on his pompous Throne;
A prouder Sovereign never gazed upon
A prouder Court; yet not the same was he,
The Gothic Ruler whose portentous frown
Deep shades of gloom cast on his chivalry;
Their lustre paled before a cheerless Crown.

'Let in the wizards, whosoever they
That bring a message, be it good or evil;
Great Heaven's orders monarchs must obey,
Receive the angel or confound the devil.'

"The doors swing open, curtains fly aside,
Two figures enter wondrous old and white,
Advance unfearing with majestic stride;
Broad cinctures girdle round their mantles bright,
On which inwrought the stars of Zodiac shine;
Their beards descend like waterfalls of spray,
With ivy leaves their white locks intertwine,

In hollow sockets roll their eyes of gray.

'What have ye, wizards, say?' the King commands.

'Who sends you hither with you strings of keys
That hang in heaps beneath your bony hands?

If aught ye know of truth or mysteries
Reveal unfearing, men, what we should know,

For evil tidings ye shall go unblamed,

For good we favors on your age bestow;

Have leave to speak, we want your errand named.'

Hereat the wizards bow before the Throne,

Each lays his hand upon his bunch of keys,

They speak as if their voices were but one,

The King looks earnest, earnest his grandees.

"'We know, O, King! that when this earth was young Immortal powers mortal beauty loved, Then great Alcides into being sprung, Who from their base the rocks of Calpe moved To make that Strait thro' which Atlantic flows Into the Inland grandly spreading Sea, What time he built—our secret record shows— That magic tower, Toledo's mystery, And made our sires guardians of the trust Which hides an awful secret from the eye; And of their lineage, King, we are the last Who guard its entrance into which to pry Some kings attempted in the early past, But found it fateful to attempt the sky. No human hand could such a structure raise Prodigious high and lustrous as a jewel;

Four brazen lions are the tower's base, The shape is round, its finish beautiful, While mystic symbols, wrought into the wall, Of marvels tell magicians to astound: The rash intruder horrid shrieks appal, No mortal ear may stand the dreadful sound, Which rings terrific, as an angry hell, Chilling the blood, the marrow in the cave. Thus even Cæsar durst not break the spell, Too wise a man the sullen Fates to brave; Since were a daring ruler once to wake The terrors which therein enchanted lie, He would Hispania's proud dominion break Her people ruin, himself a vagrant die.— That spell to chain Alcides left his will: Each monarch who shall rule in his domain, Shall to his tower's gate add lock and seal To ward off dismal times from noble Spain. That this be done, O King, we humbly pray, Lest clouds obscure the brightness of thy rule, Thy welfare bids the custom to obey; To shirk our office were undutiful.'

"Don Roderick's brow, unsoften'd, gathers thought,
His knights astonish'd the strange message hear,
The wizards' bearing seems with evil fraught,
Their voices rattle and inspire fear,
And what they say, as if by magic wrought,
Like ghostly echoes vibrate in the ear.

'To-morrow, wizards, who may now depart—

To-morrow, cavaliers,' the King replies;
'Ye shall the wonder see of mystic art
And know the King who Hercules defies.'—
Yet not uncompanied the King remains,
The highest priest Toledo honors stays,
The old Urbino, whom a word detains;
His tested prudence Roderick's temper sways;
The Bishop's counsel at the conclave reigns,
Whom the young Monarch filial homage pays.

"'The tower, Bishop, never enter'd since The pagan Libyan shut it with a spell, Shall ope its portal to a Christian prince Unframed to quail before the arts of Hell: I mean, Señor, the tower's hoard to see The devil owns, that should to use be given; If not a treasure, what that mystery Thus hid in darkness from the light of Heaven?' The royal Goth concludes, Urbino sighs Alarmed at the rashness he would blame Were not a king the one who seeks advice, A sage the other, who did often tame Impetuous Youth by a restraining word: Too wise a man mad Hardihood to scare By threatening horrors in the tower stored He thus implores Don Roderick to beware: 'Beware of Mystery, my son, man's right And rule encompass things he knows and sees. Not such as buried lie in awful night; God hides His horrors to preserve our peace.

Thank Providence who helped thee redress Thy people's wrong, avenge thy father's eyes, Thy kinsmen's blood Witiza's wickedness Had shed no more to Heaven for vengeance cries. Safe on thy Throne, prosperity around, The forge, the plough, the loom and mart in swing, A warrior nation, but no warlike sound, And princely vassals, who their tributes bring, Why conjure powers held by magic bound, Why Destiny forestall, O, valiant King? How little even do the knowing know Of things the eye contemplates day by day! Mysterious is the plant and brute that grow, Mysterious still when plant and brute decay; Mysterious spheres we see in ether glow, Mysterious laws the earth and heaven sway; And, as to spirits here and in the skies, Like Space and Time, we penetrate in vain Into the Mystery of mysteries, Age after age the search begins again; For as in the beginning God alone The secrets knew hoar Chaos hid and Night, So in His Grace He made the Evil-one And his domain invisible to sight, Else shapes of horror turned into stone The race of man that perish'd with affright. Good angels guard us while those cohorts black Distribute ills and revel in foul things,

In league with Sin they strive this world to wreck Abhor each birth that joy and virtue brings;

The air they poison, Plague is in their track,

They madden kingdoms, tempt the noblest kings
To break some law that sets their malice free,

When, worse than tigers breaking thro' the cage,
They spring in legions and with hellish glee
Destruction scatter in appalling rage.
Forbear, O Monarch, agents to unchain,

Who, once at large, no power can control;
Still undisturbed guard the weal of Spain,

The secret slumber, while the ages roll.'

"As if in answer to Urbino's plea,

The King and priest are startled by a howl,

A howling laugh, like demon's mockery;

Don Roderick stares, the Bishop says: 'An owl,—

An owl, good Lord! I never heard its like—

A laughing owl!' The Monarch says: 'Good night.'

The sentinels their midnight signal strike,

All windows darken, one continues bright.—

"Florinda's window that; why up so late,
Count Julian's daughter, and why thus in tears?

Most lovely thou among the maids of State,
Thy father ranking high among the peers,
In thee brave Roderiek worships Beauty's flower,
His heart is thine, his paradise thy room,
What meditates thy soul at this late hour?
Why at this hour with thee thy faithful groom?—
Hear, maidens fallen, mates of Shame and Vice,
Florinda's outrage drowned Spain in blood;

Terrific grim the vengeful Furies rise
'Gainst Villainy that rapes weak Maidenhood;
But angels weep and Virtue hides her face
When virgin Beauty in her sweetest mold,
The fairest creature sent this earth to grace,
Compacts with Lust, proposing to be sold.
Thy fame, Florinda, equals Helen's fame,
But noble thou, Troy's shameless harlot she;
Thy blighted blossom is Don Roderick's shame,
A hiss for her, Compassion's tear for thee.

"'Hear me, Lorenzo, treasure every word— I would to God, thou hadst the wing to fly— To tell Count Julian, thy magnanimous lord, His daughter's shame, her burning agony; Disgrace, Disgrace, the beastly Roderick brought On me, our house,—Lorenzo tell him this— Don Roderick treats me like a slave he bought, Florinda feeds his carnal villainies! No more, thou knowest all, away, away! Thou hast a sister, act in her defense, If thou be slow, thou shalt for grace not pray, Fly to avenge a maiden's innocence! Inhuman King, a Ruler and a ghoul! So bland in manner and so foul in guile, So lost to Honor, so deprayed in soul, If this be kingly was Witiza vile? Hie thee, I burn, Florinda faded fast, To Ceuta speed, lay this in father's hand; Tell mother, too, our happiness is past,

May Heaven's curse on Roderick's head descend!'
Lorenzo bows: 'I saddle straight my steed
And swear, dear lady, neither sleep nor bread
Shall nurse my body nor delay my speed,
Before Count Julian's eye this message read.'

"A lonely rider speeds thro' night and wind, As the for life Lorenzo seaward flees, He town and hamlet flying leaves behind And rests no moment till he Ceuta sees. Count Julian trembles with repressed wrath— 'Florinda! dastard—wretch—a father swears!'— He cries exasperated, pants for breath, Then Count and Countess Roderick's bosom curse. 'My daughter's outrage, Count,' Frandina cries, 'Shall soon the sword of Nemesis unsheathe, Myself and kindred I shall sacrifice, If thou be soft, I deathful venom breathe; Thou shalt behold a trampled mother lead Inflamed legions to a deadly strife. Let Vengeance rage, and Spain to death shall bleed, Florinda's mother is Count Julian's wife!"

"Florinda's fate," Columbus interjects,
"The spirit saddens, humbles human pride,
To see man's majesty the vile defects
Of brute creation with the beast divide,
Unhinges faith in greatness hard to miss.
Whom trust or honor if the great be false?
If kings resort to villainous infamies

And Virtue violate within their walls? I hold it sinful over things to brood Which, as the spider in Almighty's plan, Or as the venomous reptile in the wood, Are for some purpose here unknown to man; But in my bosom, ready to revolt, A feeling wakes unconquerably strong, That would invoke just Heaven's thunderbolt To shatter instruments of earthly wrong, That blur endowments of potential might, The gift of thought, the magic of the tongue, The sceptre's awe, the sovereign's sacred right. A kindlier age, a juster time will come, A sounder reasoning, a gentler mood, Bespeaking mercy for those creatures dumb Now cut or stung, or wallowing in blood, The human hand inflicting wound and sting In greed or malice on a helpless brood, Dissecting limb by limb while quivering, As if hyenas nurs'd us in the wood. Abominable this! yet murders worse Are perpetrated by the deadly steel, When brothers, heedless of the ancient curse, Each other's manhood trample under heel; Or drunk with lust, inebriate with vice, The fiend incarnate match in brutal deed, Devotion strangle at her sanctuaries, The mother outrage, make the infant bleed.— The dream of human love so highly prized,

So fondly prophesied and sung with glee,

The dream of peace as yet unrealized. Are visions sweet of Sacred Poesy, And will be dreams as long as passions rage, The sword is arbiter, and Mammon lord; Astræa fled with the Saturnian Age, And Themis hates the havor of the sword. Love's rosy angel from the realms of bliss With olive wand descends and smiling face, His look is joy, a ravishment his kiss, The sweets of earth are held in his embrace; And close behind another angel flies Of moonlight lustre and congealing breath, Celestial comforts glisten in his eyes, Some call him Peace, and others call him Death; For Love and Peace, so rarely matched here, Where selfish Greed the nobler thought absorbs. Together dwell beyond this mortal sphere, Two guardian powers in the blissful orbs."

Here, bursting earthward from the starry space
In glowing masses, like a shatter'd star
Of red and white, an all-inflaming blaze
Fell on the Ocean's waters leagues afar
From them who, stupefied, the wonder saw
No mariner had ever seen before;
They next Columbus stood amazed with awe
On seeing this enormous meteor.
"Who saw the like? I have been long at sea,"
The pilot said to those who wondering stood,
"But never, never such a prodigy

Did I behold in any latitude

As this tremendous fire from on high;

And that astounding change the compass shows

Doth something mean, a warning from the sky

To seek a shore before the danger grows."

To him the Admiral impatient speaks: "Too hasty verbiage this, too cheap advice For one who, fearless, Truth and Honor seeks, And means to find them at a sacrifice. We must prepare yet stranger things to see Than those we saw and which are not as strange As will appear the great discovery That will make distant kingdoms interchange Whatever God hath given them to give Of precious things in matter or in soul; And thus will spread Salvation, I believe, Disseminated to the utmost pole. The world without reflects our world within, One sees the pictures of his gloomy thought In all creation, and is bound to glean, Instead of roses, herbs with poison fraught. No matter what man's avocation be, Diseas'd in mind his reason hath no sway, Confusion drives him to Despondency, A demon goads him on, he must obey.— For days I stood the compass to observe, Like you I saw that flame in mid-air spread,

I saw the needle deviate and swerve

And watching wonder'd, but I felt no dread.

New wonders are but new, and that is why They draw attention and inspire awe; But when did Nature suffer man to spy Into the secrets of her mystic law? Who knows the agencies that move the globe, The Ocean stir, and make volcanoes flame? The milder wonders which in beauty robe This multifarious world, who knows their name? The poles the magnet govern, we maintain, Yet here a problem Science hath to solve; The needle's deviation I explain By ruling stars, which in the space revolve, While in that outburst of ethereal glow There is no warning but a meteor Of greater magnitude than those I saw In warmer climates years and years ago, But never dream'd of flying to a shore."

The seamen laugh, the pilot feels the hit;
He swallows gall and vows within his breast
To make his comrades hateful venom spit
And vex the Admiral, when farther West.
Columbus in his cabin finds repose,
The minstrel with his instrument retires,
Unheeded in their nooks the sailors doze
Between the deep and the supernal fires;
The vessels hurry on their westward course,
Each one in haste before the other speeds,
With early dawn a heavy shower pours,
And light is breaking on a sea of weeds;

A sea of weeds the Admiral astounds,

"We sail on sunken rocks," the seamen cry;

Two hundred fathoms tho' the plummet sounds,

It strikes no bottom, but they often try.

A sea of green, and lo! a tiny bird,

And there another!—whence these creatures frail

That breed on land and are in orchards heard,

And seldom venture far into the gale?

And yonder northward, if it be no dream,

A range of rocks the naked eye discerns;

Like distant islands in the sun they gleam,

On them his eye Alonzo Pinzon turns.

"It must be land, Señor," he sends his voice,
"A massive bulk looms in the North remote,
What else but land?" The mariners rejoice,
The birds confirm it and the weeds afloat.
"Illusion, friend," Columbus answers plain;
"No land to-day, no land for weeks to come;
You see the vapor-mountains of the main
That fringe at sunset the horizon's dome."

Downhearted seamen watch the suns descend
And rise the moons, the watchmen are awake,
The weeds are dense, but far and wide no land,
On shoreless waves they see the mornings break;
The helmsman whispers into eager ears
Dark tales of many a becalmed ship
That, eaught in weedy seas no zephyr stirs,
With crews decayed, a graveyard on the deep.

"Call me a fool," the wily Ruiz adds, "For verily I am not one too wise, Nor am I stuff that risk or hardship dreads, Nor much inclin'd ill-omens to despise, Which speak as voice and tongue in warning tone: 'Return, return before it be too late,' Whereto our Chief replies: 'Sail on, sail on,' Is this not challenging, not scorning Fate? Call me a coward, but I rather cast My lot with Caution than with Madness blind: The compass lies? well, and that rotten mast We saw adrift two hundred leagues behind? Five weeks our ships the setting sun pursue, What mariner did farther sail than we? Or, daring farther, who beheld the crew That durst encroach on seas of Mystery? Our better gales struck westward hitherto. If none blow eastward how shall we return? Old sailors tell of seas as thick as glue Where underneath volcanoes boil and burn: Of stormy oceans whereon frosts congeal The broken glaciers into mounts of ice. Which grinding rumble and like thunder peal, While glacial surges in commotion rise. What man may Death escape? but O, my bones! It is so horrible—why, laugh again— To have no tomb amid the holy stones Of those we loved, who buried lie in Spain."--As grumbling children at the sound of drums The window seek, forgetful of their cares,

Descry the quarter whence the music comes

And, bounding forward, in the street disperse,
So at the first vibration of the chords

The seamen's grievances melt all away;
They like the minstrel who, in measured words,
Continues thus his interrupted lay.

"A royal pageant issues from the fort
King Wamba built so many years before
Toledo knew Don Roderick and his Court,
Who now proceeds the tower to explore
At any hazard, burning to excel
His predecessors who their locks did add
To hold imprison'd the dark might of hell,
Lest, once unchain'd, it desolation spread.

"Already yonder, massive as a rock,
The magic tower stood, as if that day
It had been chisel'd of some giant block
Of multicolor onyx to display
A dazzling brightness which resplendent shone,
Appearing far a mirror of the sun,
None doubting that it had been raised alone
By genii's hand no mortal gazed upon;
And on it, as Don Roderick nearer drew,
Inscrutable lore, in emblematic signs,
With many other wonders came to view
Inwrought in figures and in mystic lines.
The King and Court before the tower halt,
A shudder steals on him, and there the gate

That gives admittance to the secret vault

He, trembling inly, means to penetrate.

'A marvelous structure this and wondrous high,

It overtops by far the nearest rock,'

The Sovereign utters with a searching eye,

'And no access save thro' you pierced block.

These locks shall yield and never lock again

This rusty portal Superstition guards;

Such is my will, and I, the King of Spain,

Will have it open straight, ye timid wards.'

"As when vague rumors of impending war The frowning air of Certainty assume, On fire set the lusty warrior, But fill the peaceful heart with fear and gloom, So Roderick's order to unlock the gate The ardor kindles of young cavaliers, While older heads his rashness deprecate; Once more Urbino utters his grave fears, It were unwise to break the seal of Fate, But his appeal the King impatient hears; 'This day, I vow, this mystery shall cease,' Don Roderick cries, 'I foil the devil's plan, Hispania's Monarch will no demon please, No heathen's magic bind a Christian man. Confound this mockery on our belief In saints and angels, and redeeming Grace, When did a holy kingdom come to grief For hurling scorn at Satan's brazen face? Your keys deliver, wizards, I command,

The ancients locks shall drop off one by one, The portal, opened by a firmer hand, Shall give us passage thro' that arch of stone!

"Six hours are spent before the gate is clear, A pile of locks lies pell-mell on the ground, The knights invade it with a warlike cheer, The tower echoes with a mocking sound; The portal yields to neither strain nor shock, As if invisible powers barr'd the way. It seems immovable as a living rock And makes the King impatient of delay. Don Roderick moves the gateway to assail, Which at his touch swings open wide and free. It opens with a deep lamenting wail, Which scares the boldest of his chivalry; Yet some advance and others follow soon. But sooner backward in benumbment fall. 'The air is pest!' they cry, and many swoon; 'Then, fires light!' they hear the Monarch eall. A throng of courtiers burning torches bear, The flames are flaring up in dismal night, The heat improves the pestilential air, They venture farther, but recoil with fright; In speechless awe they point athwart a hall Where, at the entrance to an inner space, A horrid demon on a pedestal With glaring eyes revolves a flaming mace Which, twirled fast, appears a flying wheel,

Its quick rotations harrowing the ground;

With fearful resonance the bar of steel

Flies up and downward with appalling sound,
While in red letters on his breast they read:

'My duty this to let the dark be dark,'
As the devil had himself a creed,

And would have others his consistence mark.

Amazed Don Roderick the dread figure eyes,

A Cyclop grim of magic or of hell,

Who to the inmost dome access denies,

And seems no power easy to compel.

"'Whoever thou, by Him I conjure thee,
Whom flesh and spirit made are to obey,
If man may solve this tower's mystery,
To let King Roderick penetrate to-day
The inmost secret buried in this hold;
The hour is come for Fate to lift her veil
Cast on Futurity in ages old,
And I am here, that her decree prevail;
Thus let me enter, that I may unfold
Events to come within Hispania's pale.'

"Stiff held the demon his terrific rod
Suspended high, as the in prompt response;
His visage turned and he made a nod,
A fiendish jeer froze on his face of bronze.
Next moment saw the King and Court amazed
Beneath a dome unlighted by a ray,
But thick with jewels, it like the Orient blazed
Close after dawn in early hours of May;

The mad intruders dumb with wonder gazed
On wealth and splendors mystic in display;
A blaze of gems shone from a vault of blue
That hung with naught the massive dome to hold,
And in the centre their attention drew
A jewel'd casket on a stand of gold.
It bore the legend, that the Libyan mage
Had built the edifice by magic art,
And on the casket graven was the age,
The secret here Alcides did impart.

"'This lid a king may raise and none but he
Dare lay a hand on what the times concealed;
His be the right to know his destiny;
If so he choose, to him it be revealed.'
The King exclaims: 'If right be mine to know
Decrees immutable, why hesitate?
Let me have knowledge of impending woe
For me and mine reserved by ruthless Fate!'

"A trembling hand the Ruler's arm withheld,
It was Urbino's, who appeal'd again:
'Forbear, my King! thou art not yet compell'd
To read thy lot or learn the fate of Spain;
Let things unknown be hidden here and bound,
Why conjure terrors, why untimely stir
The fiends of evil, why the trumpet sound
To wake the Furies, King, forbear, forbear!'
But, as a maniac bent to have his will
Resistance flouts, unmoved by threat or plea

Don Roderick's passion goads him to reveal
That selfsame moment the dark mystery.
'Resistless longing seizes me,' he cries,
'To read the omens of my evil star;
I cannot, Bishop, heed thy good advice
And now move backward, having gone so far;
I ope this casket ready, should they rise,
To reap the curses of Pandora's jar!'

"'Pandora's jar'—the high rotunda rings,
The hollow echoes Roderick's prowess mock,
As if the genii, rustling on their wings,
Above him hover and around him flock,
While he his gauntlet on the table flings
And quickly turns the casket's magic lock.—
What might thus Necromancy or the Fates,
Or other demons ruling things below,
For cycles past between two copper-plates
Forbidding hide a monarch should not know?
Don Roderick wonders as he forward draws
A folded canvas worthless to behold,
But from within it baneful shadows throws,
And spreads a living battle when unroll'd.

"'Thy kingdom's foes behold, now on the way,
Rash Ruler, thee and thine to overthrow.'

He reads and ponders over with dismay,
And heaves a sigh: 'The Lord will mercy show.'

Still by the picture every eye is charmed,
A turban'd multitude they see thereon

A Gothic host encounter fierce and armed, The warriors yell, the horses wildly run; It is no dream, a multitudinous roar, As of a battle fought a league away, Is heard begotten by this phantom war, The Goths are staggering, whom Arabs slav. And ever-growing, as a swelling cloud, The canvas grows and mingles with the air, The armies fight, the cries are hoarse and loud, The dome resounds with curses of despair; Terrific howls convulse the ample hall, Which alternate with shrieks and groans and sighs, The myriad gems incrusting the round wall Are all aglow, as if hyenas' eyes, Above a field whereon the battle swells; They hear the drum, the trump and cymbal clash, Amid confusion and infernal yells, They see Don Roderick's steed, Orelia, rush, The King unhorsed, pierced and lost to sight. 'Our King! our King!' a knight in terror cries, Cold Horror all the others puts to flight, With them the King the fateful tower flies.

"They run, no demon stands before the door,
"Tis gone, and at the gate they stricken find
The wizard-sentinels who breathe no more,
The passing demon left them dead behind;
They try to shut the portal as before
To calm the anguish of the royal mind,
When all at once the brazen lions roar,

As rattling thunder bursting on the ear,
The rocks are quaking, heavy torrents pour
From leaden skies; intensified they hear
The phantom armies in delirium rage,
And, fearing lest they issue from within
In open air their horrid war to wage,
They hurry headlong from the hellish din.

"At night's approach Toledo stood aghast, For storm and hail and fearful thunder came, And hollow wailings mingled with the blast And thro' mid-air fled grisly shapes of flame. The Court was up, Don Roderick could not sleep, Remorseful at the rashly broken spell; He heard the wailing howls, the tempest sweep, And felt the rockings of the citadel, Whereas before his vision all alive The ghastly combat of the tower soared; He saw his warhorse roaming in the strife, Himself unhorsed, around the battle roared. And when he slumber'd fearful dreams were his. The shricks and groans continued in his ear; He rued his own, his Kingdom's miseries, The night was long, the morning brought no cheer. And of the visions haunting him that night He had Urbino call'd to tell him this.— 'Methought I wander'd in a seat of light And golden groves, it was a seat of bliss, Where flower and herbage sweet aroma waft, From lake and brook delicious breezes rise,

The air is balmy and the zephyr soft,

And birds are warbling songs of paradise.

A flower more beautiful than aught I saw,
Of tints and fragrance never known beneath,
Did toward its beauty all my senses draw;
My touch did blight it, turning all a heath.

And, as a forest-fire in no time

A blooming region into ashes turns,
Or, as the red Simoon in Afric's clime
Sometimes an oasis in passing burns,
So sweeping, like the shadow of a cloud,
I saw a night the region's bloom enshroud,
Trees waved and sighed, moaning sad and deep,
Their branches wriggling like so many snakes;
A maiden shade I heard among them weep,

I knew that voice, which all the Furies wakes.—
Florinda, Bishop, ah, it was her ghost!
She fled at me with scrpents on her head;

I would to God I had to face a host
Of raving foes, for fame my blood to shed!
But here a girl I dreaded to resist,

While piecemeal she my soul and body tore; I ask thy help, Urbino, thou art priest—
They were intense, the agonies I bore;

Intense the horrors which this night I stood

Amid the tortures of a living hell;

The lakes have turned into neels of blood

The lakes have turned into pools of blood And into one of these methought I fell.

And, weltering within the recking pool,
I in the gloom espied a Gorgon start,

His talons grasping an infernal tool,

A red harpoon, that piercing struck my heart

And bore me upward with a hissing noise;

My wriggling limbs he whirled fiercely wild;

Count Julian's face it wore, and in his voice

It yell'd "Florinda slain!—my child, my child!"

"Urbino counsels, that the tower's gate
Be shut and seal'd as quick as effort may.
'It shall be shut and seal'd at any rate'
The King asserts, 'it shall be done to-day.'
His chivalry again Don Roderick calls
Who, robed in pomp, appear to do his will,
But when he leads them toward the magic walls
The bravest knights unspeakable horror feel.
And lo! astonish'd many loud exclaim:
'A bird! an eagle yon that soars on high
Above the tower, in his beak a flame—
An eagle bringing fire from the sky!'

"They see amazed the fatal bird alight
Upon the tower with the flaming brand,
He flaps his wings with overblowing might,
As the the winds were all at his command.

'The tower burns!' Don Roderick signifies,
Indeed the blaze had caught the tower's crown,
And, as a glowing pillar, seeks the skies,
And pours in volumes to its bottom down;
Consumed the edifice in ashes lies,
The greatest miracle Spain gazed upon.

Dense flocks of ravens in the North appear,
Who east a shadow like a thundercloud,
Around the cinders winging they career
And blow the ashes, shricking hoarse and loud;
With them the winds engage and blow amain
The dust to scatter over hill and vale,
And where an atom falls there is a stain
Of thicken'd blood that makes Hispania pale."

"A wonder-story this and given well," Columbus said, "a mighty sermon this; Let ages know, why Roderick's Kingdom fell, Why Spain endured unutter'd miseries. But forty thousand Bedouins Taric led When Spain nine times this number had in field, Yet overpower'd soon the Spaniard fled, Too weak a host one guilty life to shield. Don Roderick's crime insatiate Vengeance fed And lurking Treason did his army wield. Hath Taric conquer'd Spain by dint of might? Her fallen Monarch was her deadliest foe: There lives a God all earthly wrong to right, A father's sorrow, and a mother's woe; Don Roderick did Florinda's virtue blight, Her sire's vengeance brought that Ruler low. As never harpy birth gives to a dove, So from vile Treason naught but evil springs; It is a law, that love engenders love, And in due time one vice another brings."

BOOK X.

ARGUMENT.

The brewing conflict between Columbus and his crew assumes a serious aspect. He counts on Rodriguez. Ruiz, at the head of a deputation from the crew, urges the Admiral to return, foreboding trouble in case of persistence. Columbus expresses his determination to earry out the order of Spain's Monarchs, whereupon Ruiz incites his shipmates to revolt, but is sternly met by Rodriguez, who condemns the defiance offered to authority, stigmatizes the scheme as unworthy of manly mariners, and threatens to encounter those who would resort to force against the Admiral. The knowledge of his strength checks the revolt for A reaction in the feeling of the crew. How it came the day. about. How it affected Columbus, who strikes the minstrel's harp, dwelling on memories sweet and painful. join his Felipa in the heavens, and believes in the soul's immortality. Recalling the siege of Malaga he tells what he had experienced there. The desperate sally of the Gomercs from Gibralfaro. The vision spread before him by Felipa on a rock overshadowed by that citadel, is full of meaning and dim portent. Columbus has a premonition, that land is near, warns the crew to be on the outlook, reminding them of Providential Grace shown them thitherto. He retires to the poop of the "Santa Maria" full of anxiety, breathing a prayer, that, to escape the dread of a mutiny, land may be sighted before daybreak. gleam of light catches his attention and that of Pedro Gutierrez. Another glimmer is followed by the cry of "land!" whereat the Admiral kneels to give thanks to God, and is joined by all on board his vessel.

Thy trouble's cause unfold, great mariner,

That on thy forehead gathers deepening shade;

Not thee the pilot's minor fears deter

From searching mysteries thou didst invade,

But grave Suspicion, lest they malice bear
Thyself and Quest by look and frown betray'd;
They, who, unpacified by patient speech,
Consult in secret and defiant scowl,
Are desperate men resolved to overreach
Their Chief or perpetrate some action foul.

Six hundred leagues behind without an isle

Betwixt them lie and the extreme of Spain,

Three times the cries of "land!" the crews beguile,

And still they sail upon a boundless main;

True, tunny shoals and birds are often seen,

That seldom haunt interminable seas,

And herbage sweet is drifting, fresh and green,

The wave is rippled by the softest breeze;

Yet many hopeful days have glided by,

Another month is drawing to its end,

And still the seaman water sees and sky;

And now again they watch the sun descend

On shoreless distances; in vain they spy

A friendly harbor or an isle—no land!

No land next morrow, and no land next eve,
The sailors gather pent up spleen to vent;
To risk their lives Columbus had no leave,
Agreed they mutter growling discontent;
And, as a brewing tempest, gathering fast,
Low-rumbling warns the wayfarer to seek
The safest shelter from the threatening blast,
So does the Admiral, perceiving quick

The swelling anger of the fretful crew,

His measures take, determin'd to maintain,
Should Mutiny a reckless course pursue,

Authority conferr'd on him by Spain.

"Be near at hand, Rodriguez, Ruiz fumes
And Roldan seconds him, I hear, to-day;
Too much that shipmate on my mood presumes,
He shall be overborne, betide what may.—
There seven come whom Ruiz seems to lead,"
Columbus said, advancing toward the band;
Rodriguez stealthily with utmost speed
Departs and comes, his iron bar at hand,
"What would ye have?" the Chief accosts the few.
"That I may grant with damage to no one?
Before you speak, remember that I do
My mission hold from Spain's imperial Throne."

The pilot said: "My mates have chosen me
The bearer of their wills that you may heed
And, having heeded, answer willingly,
Lest speech degenerate into mutinous deed;
And who could well despondent men subdue,
In feud with Terror they propose to flee?
I voice the temper of a desperate crew
To action driven by Despondency.
Why farther yet our leaky vessels press,
With scarce a hope to sight the promis'd shore
Amid a vast of awful emptiness
That rolls immeasurable forevermore?

If you had reckon'd rightly we ere this
Had lighted on the Indies hereabout,
Or on some other new discoveries
To be approached by a Western route;
But wherefore sail, the outlook being dim,
The perils great and growing every hour,
In mad pursuit of the horizon's brim,
Exceeding man's, defying Heaven's Power?
Uninjured tho,' unthreaten'd we are not
On caravels that water draw and slime
And, unrepaired, are sooner sure to rot
Than we to see a hospitable clime,
Unless we hasten to escape a lot
Which, being dallied, constitutes a crime.

"Strange portents urged us our track retrace,
The magnet's variation something tells;
An ominous token was the bursting blaze,
Another the preposterous heaving swells,
Which rose uproarious smitten underneath
By furious puffs into the ambient air,
While in the atmosphere there was no breath,
No zephyr even to produce a stir.

"Distress will come, Señor, too late to learn
A wholesome lesson for a wiser use,
My comrades urge the speediest return
And I beseech, Señor, do not refuse;
We should unsatisfied not go astern,
It were unwisdom to provoke Abuse."

"My answer take," the Admiral retorts, "And harp no more on cowardly designs; He shall be mark'd who Peace and Order thwarts, And scorned he, who like the dastard whines. Such be your gratitude for Guidance mild, For gentle breezes wafting us in play Toward glorious conquest, cradled as the child In air suave, as Andalusia's May, In lieu of stormy surges furious wild Which ye shall have, for which ye seem to pray! Inglorious thought to turn for morbid fear With vacant distances to be retraced, When symptoms indicate the goal is near, A happy realm beyond a rolling waste, To foil the Quest, undo a long career, As coward fly, as dastard be disgraced! This, Ruiz, nothing else than this I hear In thy petition and the voices raised To frustrate Sovereigns in a cherished plan By threats rebellious on a distant sea.— Let all beware, for here I am the man Who do command by Spain's Authority. Ye knew me fair, but knew me half till now, Your sourness festers like a foul disease; It clouds with melancholy every brow, Each one assiduous but himself to please, As if a Chief could rude Defiance brook In those enjoined orders to obey; My generous vein for weakness ye mistook, I make no Harshness do what Kindness may.

But in defense of Right ye dare invade,

If all these crews were clad in season'd steel,

Each rebel branding a Damascus blade

To bend my power to a baser will,

They could no more the base of Etna move

Than force Columbus tamely to give in

What King and Queen would justly disapprove,

And which to do a folly were, a sin.

"Thus unavailing waste of lungs is this To ask a thing impossible to grant; Within the reach of great discoveries, A royal fleet for one fix'd purpose sent, Should wheel around unhazarded by aught, Except the gall of disobedient men; It better were you had a Tartar caught Or measured strength with some wild Saracen Than front Columbus with a threatening mien.— Irrevocable words I speak to you Regardless of intimidating spleen, I do my duty, bidding you to do Your Monarch's ordinance, which shall be done; And for your sake do not this scene renew Revolting to Hispania's lofty Throne, The lustre blighting of a famous crew."

Herewith the Admiral his cabin sought
With open ear to catch each sound without,
His nervous manner show'd uneasy thought,
A serious plight was his, he had no doubt;

Nor was it long before commingling noise
Astern created rent the tranquil air,
Whence, louder than the rest, the angry voice
Of Sancho Ruiz rung thus in despair.

"Are we no more than puppies drown'd in pools, No more than cattle dolts to slaughter lead? If forty men count thirty-seven fools, Know Sancho Ruiz is not of their breed. The devil's curse on slaves who cringe in awe Before a scarecrow flapping in the wind, As the all others were but men of straw, Or bobtail'd bipeds with a pea as mind. A coward I! You should the pirate see— But he is dead, I fell'd him long ago— And here the scar, a hurt he left on me, I stabb'd the corsair with one stunning blow; And as to Moors I slew them by the score In seven sieges round impregnable forts; These were engagement in a righteous war, The Lord have grace on me,—they were no sports, Those horrid Gomeres Hamet el Zegri led, The cohorts El Zagal madden'd by his yells, Like frighten'd game before our standard fled, He was himself there who the story tells.

"Ay, there and elsewhere Sancho Ruiz strove When Cidi Yahye, who did never bend, The gates of Baza held no host could move: The bold Lord Rivers, battle-axe in hand, I heard his yeomen fire to cut their way, I later saw him bleeding in the sand, And saw the teeth he lost in the affray. This was at Loxa where I Death escaped Miraculously thro' a broken spear; Had I been brought to light a dastard shaped, I should not uncompell'd this vessel steer; Nor should I grumble were my country's fame In aught the gainer thro' the risks we run; But who will Madness noble Zeal misname, That, hunting phantoms thirsts to be undone? Persist in patience till perdition yawns And Hope is gone, free Spaniards that ye be, Disown the right which but a slave disowns, The sacred right for love and life to flee, The fool Obedience calls who cringing frowns, One name it hath—I call it Dastardy. If ye submit then basely swill your gall And mutter not an impotent distaste; Why rail incessant at the Admiral And railing perish in this treacherous waste? Either unauthorized Presumption check, Lead on or follow, follow, I will lead, Or let the 'Santa Maria' go to wreck And sinking we the Ocean's monster feed!"

[&]quot;Nor lead, nor follow him," Rodriguez cries,
And puts himself a barrier in the way
Of them whose maleficence glares in their eyes,
"And he that budges let him kneel and pray,

If, overbold, the Admiral he dare Defy in word or counteract in deed; For by the substance of my blood I swear, By this my bar Foolhardihood shall bleed. For shame, compose your temper, Spaniards, why, Is this armada not a royal force? And will ye King and Queen their will deny To have their Admiral pursue his course? Audacious act! The soldier could as well His marshal traverse in his settled plan. As any of this crew our Chief compel To heed the dictates of inferior men, Abandon prospects brightening day by day, Because of hazards seamen should disdain, Choose unaccountable the dangerous way, Return as dupes and be the scorn of Spain. Then weigh this well: Supposing we returned, While others, in our trail belike this hour, The golden harvest of our emprise earned— We planting for the next to cull the flower— Such news like fire in your conscience burned And would your honor and your peace devour. No, never shall this ship by force return, Our Admiral shall have the freest choice: Who is aboard of whom our Chief may learn His use of knowledge, let him raise a voice? Elsewise be slow, lest things be made too hot For him who, overdaring, breaks the peace; Long years ago I twenty corsairs fought, Ye would have thought they were a flock of geese."

They knew the man who self-reliant spoke, No flaunting braggart he, they knew him well, That crowbar which a score of pirates broke None could Rodriguez's handling it excel, And should the rioters his wrath provoke Himself, they knew it, could the riot quell. Yet unappeased, tho' in his heart ashamed, The baffled pilot breath'd half-utter'd spite, He saw his vanity once more defamed, And treasured for revenge another slight; And as a summer storm the air leaves clear Till newer vapors from the waters rise And slowly brewing, swell the atmosphere, Which pregnant hovers under lurid skies, So to their several tasks the sailors took, As if Contentment dwelt in every breast. While clenched fists they at the cabin shook Whence now Columbus issued his behest, The progress to restrain at night's approach; If land be night it might be struck unseen, It much behoov'd all to keep double watch; There be a pension and a prize to win, "Which shall be his who first the signal gives Of land in sight; his be a velvet vest Of softest fabric the silk-weaver weaves, A costly doublet made up of the best."

Now robed in purple glories vast and grand, Their mellow radiance rolling like a sea Of lucent waves, the streams of light descend

The splendors brooding on the canopy, Transcendent beautiful and ever new In multiversant, marvelous display, Which, unperceived change in shape and hue From gilded scarlet to a rosy gay; A picture breathed on the mystic blue By Him who wove Creation's primal ray. Salva Regina, the hymn of eve they sing, Columbus joins to swell the melody, He leads the chorus, deep their voices ring, Hard seamen soften, tears come to the eye; A gentler spirit now on deck prevails, Around their board the sailors offer grace, While unimpell'd the "Santa Maria" sails, The warned watchmen are soon in their place; The Admiral the balmy air inhales, Contemplating the star-bespangled space.

Then, as if waking from a passing trance,

The Chief calls: "Luis, hither bring thy harp,
That I beguile these moments of suspense,
Which in a tissue dark my spirit warp,
Recalling memories of stirring days,
When Malaga was writhing in her straits,
Insuring misery by perverse delays,
And sinking broken by inclement Fates.—
The harp is tuned, let me my fingers try;
My unforgotten Felipa did play
This instrument, she plays it in the sky
Where scraphim enraptured hear the lay.

Ah, sailing, sailing, what is Life but this? On land or water whither do we drift? Had we no dream of paradise and bliss What cause is there Life's drudgery to shift? The dearest gone, the loveliest decayed, She hath my heart inhumed in the grave, She dead! my love, my love who sung and played, Her beauty stiffen'd like a frozen wave! Her yellow form was in the coffin laid With me to mourn her, whom sweet Grace will save, I long for her, she yearning waits for me, Ah, what a ravishment the one to meet, The dearest one in blissful company, A harp in hand, the angels at her feet! I feel it deep, the Star of Hope shines bright On faithful souls, the Faith be never blind; No rosy dawn is breaking on their night Who, lacking faith, bear chaos in the mind; For life is toil, joy intermittent pain To such as doubt man's short probation here, Who see all being stream into Inane, And for the death-bed have no word of cheer. The desert howls, the forest sighs and groans, The mountains frown, the skies are deaf and dumb; The winds lament, all Nature weeps and moans To him who sees Life's conflux in the tomb; Not thus the strong-in-faith, who watch with awe The living wonder of the working All, In earth and heaven discerning plan and law,

In Life and Death a round harmonious whole.

"Such thoughts come late and come to but a few, They came to me not many years ago, When from a rock, doom'd Malaga in view, I fix'd mine eyes on the beleaguer'd foe. A thunderstriking fleet to seaward hove, The lombard shell'd her citadels by land, You would have thought they were the bolts of Jove, I saw the missiles rocky bastions rend; The deadly blows oft head and helmet clove When Goth and Moor encounter'd hand to hand. The siege of Troy no sterner features were Than that of Malaga too long sustained; It was a siege of horror and of gore Implacable, as if Medusa reigned; Since Hamet el Zegri, he the fiercest Moor, With scorn all overtures of peace disdained, And dire vengeance by his prophet swore To make Hispania pay for ground she gained. Unintermitting war the armies waged, The desperate Moslem sallied forth at night And, like the tiger, havor made and raged, Till Spain grew weary of the ceaseless fight.

[&]quot;'Behold those infidels' El Zegri cried,
Surveying Spain from Gibralfaro's crag,

'That Ponce de Leon Hamet's honor tried—
A bribe, a bribe—I should but name the bag;
He strives to conquer what he could not buy,
A braver knight did never wield a steel,
That Christian may my faith and valor try,

We might as well this night surprise the hill Whereon his banner our entrenchment mocks. Zenete, thou descend with picked men, Two thousand take of our voracious hawks, And prove thyself the hardiest Saracen; Remember these two days our castle shook And fragments fell by his aggression torn; What Moslem will such provocation brook As you advanced camp our fort to scorn? His captured flag he saw and felt the sting, Humiliating rueful was the sight, That marr'd the pleasure of his Queen and King, And brought to memory that dismal night, When, like so many hares ensured pell-mell, Among those hills the smitten flower of Spain, Encountering El Zagal, in masses fell, When of his brothers three were cut in twain, Himself escaping as a scared gazelle, Leaving behind him half a myriad slain.'

"And on that height whence Ponce de Leon sent
His monstrous bombs thick as a cloudburst shower
Which blasted Gibralfaro's battlement,
And crumbling toppled tower after tower,
Of an old friend I was the visitant,
And there detained till the midnight hour.
The cannon slacken'd its tremendous roar,
But here and there a flickering light did gleam,
The Goth was tired, tired seem'd the Moor,
The moon withdrew her lucent silver-beam;

A pleasant breeze came skimming from the sea;
He gave me couch, who treated me as guest;
A drowsy heaviness took hold of me,
Fatigue and Sleep required me to rest.

"Methought I felt a hand laid on my brow, Another touch I felt upon my eyes, The hand was cold, meseems I feel it now A tremulous voice I heard: 'Arise, arise!' Uproused I stood, familiar was the tone, Familiar, too, her features who did call, My Felipa between two powers shone, Three blazing stars upon the heavenly wall; And over them, built of a maze of light, An arch above the hosts its bow did run Emblazing Azure to its highest height, And shaming the effulgence of the sun. Aback of all methought Abaddon spread Its blackest Void where Space and Time are naught, Whence all the spectres issue mortals dread; The Void whereon the Lord His Cosmos wrought Was yawning dark and mute, a rolling main Of darkness palpable as clouds at night; Here was the mystery of the Inane Contrasted with God's Universe of Light.

"And she on whom my soul with rapture hung,
Terpsichore's instrument upon her knee,
With cherub's touch the shining chords she strung,
The angels sharing her ineffable glee;

The spheres responded, air and ether rung, Transported with celestial ecstasy.

'From Purest Source all things are flowing pure, Those black abysses fear not, son of clod;

No ills exist for which there be no cure;

Weep not but kiss Almighty's chastening rod;

For they who patiently their lot sustain

And make the spirit triumph over clay,

Will meet Salvation in the dark Inane,

Thro' pall and grave pass to eternal day.

This world is young and man an infant still, Still fond of glitter, immature in mind;

Not his the goal here tears or blood to spill, Sad glory his in cycles run behind;

But riper ages riper men will bring

And make this earth what God would have her be,

A heavenly kingdom, man sole-ruling king,

A seat of peace and pure felicity.

Thus Life and Death dwell in this borderland Betwixt the Void and yonder spheres of bliss,

And for thy sake I in God's Name command,

That Past and Future rise from the Abyss.'—Hereat, as thousand earthquakes bursting with

Appalling uproar, cleaving mount and base,

Upsending liquid ores pent underneath

With cracking fury and consuming blaze,

Chaotic masses at her bidding hove,

Terrific thunder bellowing below,

While sheets of lightning darted from above;
Heart-chilling sounds I heard a trumpet blow;

Then shoal on shoal, as fish unnumber'd, rose Vast multitudes of men in savage state. Half-naked, club in gripe and ring in nose, Of aspect grim and greedy eyes of hate; Dispersing on the plain, on hill or mead, In wood, in glen and everyway they spread, And soon I saw them on each other feed, The son his mother, she her brother wed; By children's hand I saw their parents bleed, While male and female carnal vices bred. And seem'd in crime to revel and misdeed. A horrid cult of lust or fetich vile With rites of blood from new-born infants drawn, Did brutify man's nature and defile God's new creation, elsewise perfect grown. 'The wicked cycle this,' my love began, 'Half-conscious of his unrepented crime, Thou seest the downfall of the primal man, The Lord be bless'd, whose deluge came in time!'

"The tides of night upheaving from beneath
In murky billows on the wicked fell,
As black Cocytus in the ancient myth,
That feeds Acheron in the deeps of Hell,
And, sweeping backward, left a dreary heath
Whilst in convulsions I saw Chaos swell;
In quick succession, as upon a stage
The scenes and actors pass'd in rapid flight,
The running cycles rose age after age;
I saw great princes for dominion fight.

A human flood of races springing fast,
And, grouping under ensigns separate,
As fleeting shadows, numberless as dust,
Uprose to pass in strife and deathful hate.

"In this vast whirl of phantom strife and war One rising mass my close attention caught, It was the struggle of the Goth and Moor, The sixty battles these two races fought, And in their place, when, like the rest, they fled, A Spanish court stood 'round a Spanish throne; Of those who stood one figure bow'd his head, It was my shade, that wore a laurel crown, Meseem'd the Ruler favor'd it of all. It was my shade, that bore a flag in hand, Wearing the honors of an Admiral, And emblems of Viceroy o'er sea and land; It was my shade the next I saw in chains, A haughty Spaniard frowning at my plight; Yea, humbled was I and I woke in pains, And thank'd the Lord it was a dream of night."

Great watch is kept, no seaman shuts an eye,
Expectant of a shore, however wild;
A billion watchful eyes look from the sky,
As the to lead and cheer Time's daring child;
The winds grow lively and the sea runs high,
The men feel easy by new hopes beguil'd.
Sweet earth, sweet home, thou seat of mortal rest,
Man loves the brine as one his mistress loves

But longs for land, as babe for mother's breast,
As homesick bird chas'd from his native groves;
Sweet music of the clashing rock and surf
To him who, roaming on the watery waste,
The image harbors of the dewy turf,
The garden's gift delicious to the taste.

And he, whose Quest a glorious goal implied,
What yearning wishes his that night to hear,
Now that the crew his mastership defied,
The prayed-for signal, that a shore was near!

Did he not speak to them in gentler strain

Than loving father to a wayward son?

"God's breezes wafted you across the main

For some great purpose, that His Will be done;

Persist in patience grateful for each sign

Of Gracious Guidance toward a lofty goal:

Are ye not chosen instruments divine

Whose honor'd names shall live from pole to pole?

Be wide-awake, for, if I reckon well

We might ere midnight yet light on a shore

And thus the West's great mystery dispel

Unsolved by human wisdom heretofore."

Then from his vessel's poop with sweeping eye
The murky round the Admiral surveys;
Intense his expectation to desery
The coast of Tartary the Great Khan sways;
Unconscious from his breast escapes a sigh

And: "O, good Heaven!" thus to himself he says, "Should on a shoreless ocean rise the day,
There will be mutiny, I apprehend,
And, unprepared a crew's revolt to stay,
I put my cause, O Lord, in Thy strong hand,
Who, doing wonders, may'st the sun delay,
Or bring us timely within reach of land!"

As if in answer, lo! there broke in view

A flare of light, which, flying, cast a gleam

So far and fleet, it less attention drew

Than does the phantom of a senseless dream.

But, as the eagle's eye the game espies

When meaner fowl their distant chances miss,
So caught the gleam the Chief's unfailing eyes,
To whom the glimmer was a flash of bliss;
Yet, unconvinced, that he sure discerned
The light that vanish'd, as a spectral flame,
Columbus to Gutierrez asking turned,
Who said: "Señor, I vouch, I saw the same;
It faintly glimmer'd as a torch in hand
When carried hurriedly thro' open space,
I doubt not we are bearing toward a strand,
And might ere daybreak some great city face."

While he spoke thus they saw the light again Appear and fade, then, re-appearing die, As the it was a spectre of the main. That mocking broke between the sea and sky.

An hour, another one, and then a third
Did pass, when thunder from the "Pinta" burst
With cries of joy, and "land, land, land!" they heard;
Rodrigo de Triana cried it first;
And there it lay, that everyone could see,
A mile or so before the joyous men,
The land Chimera held and Mystery
At last approached within seaman's ken.

A voice most solemn in sublime appeal,

It was the Admiral's that rose in pray'r,

The crews responded with a sacred zeal,

And "Gloria in excelsis" fill'd the air;

With grateful tears the consecrating song

Did, like an inspiration, rise and roll,

You would have thought it was a priestly throng,

Pouring in ecstasy a rapturous soul,

Singing in unison devout and long,

As blissful beings, who had reach'd their goal.



BOOK XI.

ARGUMENT.

The return of Columbus causes great astonishment and joy throughout Hispania, and a thanksgiving service is held in churches of Palos. The discoverer's march to the Court and his royal reception by their Catholic Majesties. King Ferdinand asks Columbus to tell of the wonders of the New World, which he doth; his first causes for anxiety due to the superstitions, fears, and distrust of ill-disposed mariners; his lofty conception of the Quest and his endeavors to chronicle every observation; the umbrage the crews took on perceiving some phenomena. How be taxed his knowledge to allay their terrors. The delicious breezes, the balmy atmosphere, the unrufiled ocean, and the magnificent heavens. A sea of floating weeds alarms the men, whose disaffection threatens to assume the nature of mutiny. A phenomenal commotion of waves comes in time to dispel a new-engendered apprehension. Clouds mistaken for land; the disappointment makes things worse. Sancho Ruiz has an interview with the Admiral, urging him to return and, answered firmly, tries to incite his shipmates to revolt; he is frustrated by Rodriguez. The critical moment of the Quest and the intense worry of Columbus. Symptoms of land multiply; a reaction in the feelings of the crew, who are warned to redouble their watchfulness; a special reward promised him who would first give the signal of the discovery. A grand and solemn eve. The Admiral prays in great anxiety. His eye catches a gleam of light, which is seen by Pedro Gutierrez. A moment of suspense. A lombard of the "Pinta" thunders forth the signal of the discovery. The thoughts and emotions of the great discoverer.

Ring, joyous Palos, thy vibrating chimes,
Ring, proud Iberia, ring thy fairest claim
To glory yet unsullied by those crimes,
Which stamp thy annals with eternal shame;

Thou, hapless Victor, callous to the pleas
Of Love and Justice kneeling at thy Throne,
Hast of thy triumphs but the infamies,
Thy lustre wither'd, and thy might is gone.
Yet wilt thou live in memory for aye,
A warning and a beacon all the same;
Yea, never will thy Torquemadas die,
Nor vanish from this earth thy tarnish'd fame.

Ah me! in vain, in vain doth Wisdom rise

To teach the goal of human being here,
Her godlike councils Folly will despise
Impell'd by Selfishness in her career.
No end of wrong, no end of tears and woe,
Still tyrants revel in atrocious crime;
There is the Czar in lieu of Pharaoh,
A savage lord in an auspicious time;
And nations dare not, lest the Seythian frown,
For Justice rise, as would become the free,
Tho' babes are slain and women trampled down,
And maidens ravish'd, O, the villainy!

Hush, braggart age, too venal to be great,
Each people centred in a sordid self,
A sordid fear pervades each head of state,
Who thirst for gain, it is an age of pelf.
Preposterous idol, once a calf of gold,
Now bloated up, an elephant in size;
If such brute worship was a sin of old,
Insatiate Greed, what art thou but a vice?

And ask ye why the bells of Palos ring As clear and solemn as on Easterday? That caravel did gleeful tidings bring, Therefore those happy throngs apparel'd gay, And in each prayerhouse a gathering Who kneeling praise Him, who had led the way Of errant mariners athwart a sea Untravers'd thitherto by any keel, Now open to Hispania's Majesty Thro' Gothic emprise and a stranger's zeal. And as a hurricane that strikes the wave, Upheaving surges as it blowing sweeps, Till oceans roar which distant islands lave And Neptune welters in his furrow'd deeps; Or, as oft Victory outruns the horse The courier spurns the tidings to convey, Who finds the Kingdom's triumph in his course Anticipated by a land's display Of jubilant rejoicing, thankful glee, So with each ring the belfry sends abroad On wings of lightning the discovery By him who did the wonder of a god Away to cities and to hamlets far; All Spain is wild, incredible tales are rife As the ship returned from a star With the elixir of immortal life. The masses burn with eagerness to see The trophies of the greatest conquest made And, having seen, unanimously agree,

That none in fame may his fame overshade,

Whose great achievement is Hispania's theme;
His march to Court is like that of a king;
With cheering wonderers the highways teem,
The towns and cities with his praises ring,
And, as if struck by an inspiring stream,
In pious awe the people rise and sing,
And wave a flag or wave a greeting hand,
The maiden vying with the louder boy;
Profuse the flowers from balconies descend,
The lady's offering in hours of joy.

Proud Catalonia wears her very best

And sends her people forth with wild acclaim
And streaming banners to salute the guest,
Who comes to tell the story of his fame;
At Barcelona, where the Sovereigns bide,
Triumphal arches show the royal will
To let the splendors of Iberia's pride
Enshrine the hero of unmatched zeal.

If ever man created was to reign,

It was Columbus mounted on his horse,

A noble knight among the knights of Spain,

For Conquest made and for a Cæsar's course;

He look'd majestic as the god of day,

Of lordly carriage and of princely face,

As if intended for the grand display

Of noble company and Royal Grace;

His fifty years his locks made white and gray,

Else of his age there was no other trace.

A laughing sky—it was the prime of Spring—As mild a day as Barcelona saw,

A breeze, as if those angels were on wing, Who make the baby's cheeks like roses glow;

A city deck'd with pomp and thrill'd with glee, As tho' a sovereign victor trophies bore;

The choicest flower of youthful chivalry

Who, proud and dashing, trotted four by four To part the crowds, whose cheerings rend the air,

Such was the scene on that propitious day,

When, honor'd high, the great discoverer Beheld the Court him cheerful homage pay.—

And what a sight! men of a world unknown, Unsightly, naked, ah, see how they grin!

A beardless race, tho' full their hair is grown; How wild! what ornaments! and what a skin!

Strange birds! what plumage, and those plants behold! Each thing is new, and precious things they are,

Those bracelets, rings and coronets of gold,

Which fill the inside of an ample car.—

But nothing rouses the bewilder'd mass Until Columbus with his suit appears

Erect on horse, in gallant stateliness,

In height surmounting his attendant peers,

When multitudes their hearty joy express

And roaring voices rend the air with cheers.

No triumph this, like Pompey's of a day, Mankind will treasure that unique parade

Till earth will crumble, sunk in ages grav,

And mighty races from remembrance fade.

In regal pomp the King and Queen await
Their famous Admiral of land and sea,
Around the Throne Spain's noblest are in state,
The heir-apparent, the elate grandee,
To greet Columbus, rank'd among the great,
And learn the tale of his discovery.

He comes, he enters the triumphal hall,

A throng of cavaliers bring up his train,
His gray-white head, a stature grave and tall,
A noble brow that wears a touch of pain,
With reverence fill the Court from wall to wall,
And overawe the King and Queen of Spain,
Who rise, as if to give a monarch hail,
While he bends loyally a vassal's knee,
An homage which the Rulers do curtail,
Who bid him sit in face of Majesty.

"Your welcome be our pleasure," says the King
"Our honor'd Admiral of foreign seas,
Viceroy of distant islands, whence you bring
Those tidings which astonish us and please.
Now, what we read in outline is a mite
To feed the hunger for a rounder tale,
A relish but to whet the appetite
To know the whole and hear it in detail.
Thus give us your adventure's fullest run,
Since Providence doth deign us to possess
A new-found realm beneath the setting sun
With mines of treasure, seats of loveliness,

And heathen tribes our Saviour will redeem
Thro' us, who glory in a task we love;
For Life is nothing but a passing dream,
And kings but actors prompted from above."

And, overbrimming with a joy that shone
From eye and mien, as did the prophet's face,
When sky-directed he bestow'd a throne
Upon the shepherd-singer of his race,
Columbus bows and in sonorous tone
At once the royal bidding thus obeys.

"Exalted Majesties in emprise great, In counsel wise, redoubtable in war, Whose kingdoms grow, whose glories culminate In those new conquests on a far-off shore, It is my pleasure, as it is your will, To re-embark in spirit and sail on, Till I my self-imposèd task fulfill And lay the fruit before Hispania's Throne. Not gladder is the wooer whom the oar Propelleth swiftly toward his maiden's bower Than I was on the caravel that bore Me from Huelva, till its highest tower Receded slowly, dwindling in the blue, With coast and hill behind a heaving sea, With Ocean's vast before us to pursue, Unfathom'd gulfs of Myth and Mystery. As when a patient from confinement freed The vital breezes with delight inhales;

Or as, unharness'd, the unbridled steed
With snorting puffs the vital air assails,
So, as I saw our squadron heave and speed,
I more than zephyrs loved the rougher gales,
The sea-gull envying that laughs to scorn
The stormy violence of swelling seas,
When craven souls, despondent and forlorn,
Drink to the dregs the dastard's miseries.

"Faint-hearted men aboard my prospects marr'd Despite my suasion to allay their fear; They wrung each other's heart as men ill-starr'd When shore and rock had vanish'd in the rear: Unwilling helpers, eager to discern Ill-omens in the whisper of the breeze, Could they, combined, not force me to return, Who was to them the roving Genoese? Too soon Suspicion rankled in the breast, Alone I stood, a stranger and unloved, How could in peace I sleep? I had no rest, Tho' in my heart I the distrust reproved. Suspicion is a reptile at her best Whose grizzly coils all trust and friendship break; Its forky tongue, if oft not manifest, A deadly poison hides, it is a snake.

"The Grand Synhedrium of the ancient race,
-Before the High-Priest was allow'd access
To Zion's Ark, the Temple's holiest place,
The Seat of God's ineffable Holiness,

Full seven days before Atonement Day
The Pontiff's worthiness in Council weighed,
Doubting his worth for Israel to pray,
His conduct searching, who for Salem prayed.
'Remember, son,' the oldest priest began,
'For all the Congregation to atone,
To pray for Israel, to pray for man,
Thou wilt appear before Jehovah's Throne;
And if thou fail, unholy in thy thought,
Wilt thou escape the deep All-seeing Eye?
Dare not bestride the threshold of that spot,
The holiest beneath the sacred sky,
Unless prepared the Greatest God to meet;
For, failing in devotion, thou wilt die,
And thy demise would be a land's defeat.'

"Then wept the Senate, tears the High-Priest shed,
He diffident, tho' upright and prepared,
They, rueful to impugn a soul unread,
His person honor'd, and his sorrow shared.—
With like emotions, tho' unhonor'd then,
I enter'd on my Quest with sacred awe,
And never rested, ere with ink and pen
I noted, Sovereigns, what I thought and saw.
Too sure to doubt, yet fearful lest I be
Deceived with others who received a gleam
Of transient light from Nature's sanctuary,
And woke to find it a delusive dream.
Insidious Apprehension rose within
And Worriment to chase the hour of sleep;

Had I anew that voyage to begin,
I could not long a healthy temper keep.
Who could be calm, environ'd, as I was,
With men distrustful, superstitious, too;
With none to help Obedience to impose,
Who could rest easy with a dubious crew,
With Disaffection painted in each face,
A bent to conjure spectres from the deep,
To spy a monster in the creeping haze,
Who could a moment undisturbed sleep?

"Given the choice between a lazar's rag
And purpled cowardice I choose the first;
Let nurses chatter of the red-eyed hag,
The man who shadows fears is doubly curst;
In sense aberrant, with a nervous eye
Ever alert some demon to discern,
He sees a goblin in each fire-fly
And fears lest lightning earth and heaven burn.

"I found this true when Teneriffe broke

Her flaming peaks upon our 'stounding gaze,

Where seething streams of dense sulphureous smoke

Upshot with thunder's peal and lightning's blaze.

A wonder this, I saw Vesuvius frown

And Etna shudder, ere they belching roared;

For both alike are shaken base and crown,

Convulsed by fires which Almighty stored

Within their bowels, He knoweth best wherefore;

But crew and pilot pale as moonlight turned

On seeing forth the glowing lava pour,
As if the crater for our terror burned,
Instead of showing, how Eternal Grace
Those powers chains, which may at any hour
Fell Wickedness from off this globe efface,
Gomorrah-like deprayed lands devour.

"A broken rudder, sails unfit for use, We mended slow at the Canary Isles Where long we linger'd, with no time to lose, No wavelet stirring for a hundred miles: For word was brought, as we becalmed lay, Of hostile vessels Lusitania sent. A warlike squadron within half a day To intercept our lesser armament. King John I credited with angry blood— Too jealous he of conquest made for Spain-With stretched canvas, Danger to elude, We took the sea, but strain'd our strength in vain; For, the with utmost haste we westward stood. We made no headway on a breezeless main.— No stir at noon; the sea shines as a glass That mirrors heavens with no cloud in sight. Slow hours Impatience lengthens as they pass, At last a breeze sprung with ascending light. And, as a fish ebb holds in waters low, Leaps from the shallow toward the rising flood, Regains the Ocean with the tidal flow. The deep enlivening its unwarmed blood, So, flush'd with Animation, men and sails

Upstart conjoined, as if for a race: Uncoil'd the pilots order up the brails, Each vessel speeds, each man is in his place: But as in distance Ferro sinks her head Self-pity seizes many a fainting heart. Suasion stammers when such tears are shed As weanlings weep, who with a mother part, A mother and a nurse as dear and sweet As Cupid's longing for his chosen bride, Uncertain whether they would ever meet Thro' Fate that frowns, or oceans which divide.— I am the last to blame a homesick man. My Genoa in tender love I bear: Of all fair cities the Elysian, The fairest seat I Genoa declare; Yet where we bide there God rules in this world, I call the Universe my spirit's home; When I behold the starry skies unfurl'd My soul exclaims: 'Tis thy Father's Dome!' The boon of Faith how give it to the blind! My crew did lack it, or I am unjust In missing soundness in a morbid mind That shrank in terror at a floating mast, Such as one sees adrift, one of that kind The shipwrights often into lumber cast.

"More cause for wonder and some cause for fear
The seventh day I in our compass saw;
North-West the needle varied, it was clear
In paramount obedience to some law

Mysterious to account for, passing strange.

Three days this wonder held my constant eye,
No pilot thitherto observ'd the change,
The fourth day show'd them the new mystery
When hope their heart forsook and blood their cheek.
I read their sentiments, they were too plain
In mien and eye, for Terror cannot speak;
They thought of wife and child, afar in Spain,
Of home and friends, of parents old and weak,
Endeared all, they would not see again.

"Whatever little Science of her light
Hath granted me, I effort made to throw
On this new problem to dispel the fright,
If not by facts then by exuberant flow
Of learned verbiage Ignorance extols;
In utter doubt as to the real cause,
I spoke presumptuous of the stars and poles,
I spoke despondent spirits to compose
And, thawing slower than Lake Baikal's ice,
My warmth dissolved Stupor's frozen crust;
I labor'd hard and thought it worth the price,
When crew and boatswain I heard laugh at last.

"Foreseeing newer revelations I
But for small hours retired from the deck;
Else ranging from the poop the sea and sky,
Within my vision I did miss no speek.
My vigilance was vital furthermore
To put restraint on those I faithless knew;

I knew some others treacherous to the core,
Who would, unwatched, serious mischief brew;
Tho' Admiral, I was yet to deplore,
Who but one friend had mid a churlish crew,

"Upon the deep the blandest breezes play,
With genial mildness flows the golden beam,
The zephyrs are of Andalusia's May,
And soft the brine as Andalusia's stream;
Emblazed skies foreshow the springing day,
The sunsets glow, the eves with glories teem.
Our sails are up, our ships undriven glide
With air enough the canvas to inflate,
Like swans our keels the placid wave divide,
The peaceful nights lost Eden emulate.—

"It is September and the fourteenth night;
The heavens, thick with constellations new,
Shine brighter than the stars we deem so bright,
In Azure set much bluer than our blue;
The balmy air with music rings and song,
Don Roderick is the burden of the lay,
Luis de Torres with a fiery tongue
The minstrel's power doth and bard's display.
A burst of blaze and then a fire-ball
We in mid-heaven see scatter in descent,
As tho' a star exploded in its fall,
A dazzling flame illumes the firmanent;
We are amazed, the wonder is not small,
The fainter hearts, alarmed, throb and pant.

"Hereafter uneventful pass the days, Alternate hopes and fears possess the crew, One of my pilots dangerous blood betrays, And with his spleen he doth the rest imbue. The signs of land are numerous and sure, The dolphin plays not in the deepest seas, Nor can the tiny birds fatigue endure, Who came to cheer us with their melodies, While floating herbs for many days we pass, On these a erab is caught, it is alive; But many cry: 'It is a sea of grass, And rocks are underneath our keels to rive. Six hundred leagues our vessels westward run, Thus far we serve the King and Queen of Spain; The winds are blowing toward the setting sun, We did enough a fool's repute to gain; The last extreme of horror let us shun Before we rotting perish on the main.'

"It was so hard, Your Majesties, to hear
Such bitter clamor at my journey's end,
But soon they found they could not interfere
With my design, or make my manhood bend.
As he, who Israel made free and great,
A sea before him, mortal foes behind,
With desperate slaves his purpose to berate,
For help to Heaven turning, help did find,
So, in the anguish of a troubled soul,
I Succor sought by prayer, vow and tear,
That He proteet me, that I reach my goal,

That eastward winds dispel the sailor's fear,
Who, ever morbid, in his fancy wove
A newer tissue others to replace:
It was, that westward steady breezes drove
The ships that never could their course retrace.

"And as if bearded Neptune never died,
Like all the gods, with sky-bestriding Jove,
Meseem'd I saw his head the deeps divide,
The rolling waves like monstrous dolphins hove
Unmoved by aught above, it being still;
No cloud was there, a gentle west wind stirr'd
That could no hanging sail with motion fill;
Who would not think a miracle occurr'd?

"That selfsame day—the twenty-fifth it was—Delusion, mocking one, deceived the rest;
Alonzo Pinzon's cry hath proved the cause,
Why all saw mountains rise in the South-West.
Wild joy prevail'd, we gave praise to the Lord;
But soon mine eye could the illusion scorn;
To please the crews I steered thitherward—
We found it vapor in the early morn.
Despondency set brooding on the crew,
"Twas Sancho Ruiz who cried: 'We are doomed!"
The man was mad, his conduct was not new,
Who on my nature oft before presumed.

"The one I spoke of faithful stood between Myself and them, whose plottings reach'd my ears,

I met the glaring eyes of hateful spleen, And armed for a strife with mutineers: Return I would not, cost it what it may. Resolved my Quest to make or forfeit life; I should have rather faced an open fray Than dread the stab of an assassin's knife. In this extreme Rodriguez stood by me Most honorable, self-sacrificing, too; In heart a child, in arm an Ajax he, Alone he check'd the frenzy of the crew. God's Will ordain'd it so, immutable He, Decreeing tasks for every being here; All earthly powers rule by His Decree, As do the seraphim in every sphere; Unblest the mind who can in History The trail of Providence not follow clear Rome was no wonder with her world of chains, Not more than they she deem'd her mightiest foes: A greater wonder was that child of pains, Who rising broke the might of Pharaohs; And greater he a manger's fodder hid, Who by his end above all martyrs rose; He was as great as the great things he did, He was as holy as the task he chose.

[&]quot;A something mightier than Fear and Grief Upheld my fortitude when dangers grew, A voice within, it was my deep belief, Assured success, I knew the voice was true. Unmoved by threats I westward bore again,

October found our squadron on the sea Above eight hundred leagues away from Spain, Beneath sweet Heaven's benignant canopy. As if the blessèd isles were thereabout, Delightful airs we sunder'd all the while; The indications round us left no doubt, That land was nigh, perchance some happy isle; Such herbage green with leafage here and there As could but lately drift from some near shore, The inland birds, which darted thro' the air, The dolphin's gambols at the vessel's prore, The seamen held in expectations high; The haze of eve intense attention drew, It look'd a mountain to the pilot's eye, Who, undeceived, grumbled with the crew, But seemed loath defiance to renew.— The seventh of the month we saw great swarms Of birds South-West direct their evening flight; Small fowl that live on insects or on worms Could not, I thought, on water spend the night; Thus West-South-West our caravel took way Agreeable to the course suggested by Alonzo Pinzon on the previous day, Who change of route advised, I knew not why. Incessant symptoms of a neighboring shore For sixty hours continued to beguile The men, who watch'd the vast forevermore, Lest right or left we miss some land or isle,

And when the third day left us on the sea

The pent-up fumes broke forth in red-hot glare,

If I in thought recoil'd from Mutiny, I never saw it thus in grim despair. Not unprepared, and finding Suasion vain, My answer took the firmness of command;— If but Columbus I, it was from Spain I bore a message for the Great Khan's hand; Nor would I cede a hair-breadth of the right, With which Your Majesties invested me; Nor should I outlaws hesitate to fight, Who durst defy Hispania's Sovereignty!— And thus in open warfare with my crew Our vessels glided, steering West-South-West Where land was sure within a day or two, It was the crisis of my painful Quest. Auspicious Providence provided well For this emergency I so much feared; With break of day the seaman's anger fell, The brightest hopes of land the pilot cheered; Green river weeds, a twig with berries on, But lately sever'd from their native spot, A staff with carvings nicely cut upon, A reed, a broken board, we saw affoat.

"October the eleventh wears to eve
With golden splendors on the Western sky,
Our gliding vessels rippled waters cleave,
The crews and steersmen watch in spirits high
The boundless Ocean, eager for the fee
Assured him who would first a shore descry
Before another one the land would see.

The sun descends to the horizon's rim,

The mariners are gathering to pray;
As one they sing the daily vesper hymn,

When this, 'mong other things, to them I say.

"'I must repeat the warning I have given When the Canaries faded in our rear, Lest unawares we on some rock be driven, No caravel shall after midnight steer When westward seven hundred leagues be made; Belike this eye the outlook will reward The eye that penetrates the murky shade, And make one richer than his mates aboard. A velvet doublet purchas'd of my thrift, Beside the royal pension settled on The vigilant, be his especial gift, Whose claim shall mention'd be before the Throne. So much for Caution, but another word Remains unspoken, which herewith I speak, Lest ye impute the Mercy of the Lord To senseless Accident or Fortune's freak.— Not thus by manifold allurements drawn Did men ere this upon these deeps advance, Where never prow disturb'd the teeming spawn; Vast latitudes of darkness and romance We pass'd, as boys who bound from lawn to lawn, Will sane Intelligence misname it Chance? If I be vain I rue it, but I feel Undamped pride and honor in my breast, A joy my bosom can but half conceal,

A sense that Heaven this great emprise blest,
Who led us onward by His mighty Will
That I accomplish this immortal Quest.'—
The hours were sacred, which succeeded this;
Unrolling heavens with mild lustre blazed;
A billion glories in the fields of bliss
My spirit charmed, while the eye was dazed.
Yet earthward turning, centred in one thought,
In swiftness equal to the sunny ray,
My searching vision from a vantage spot
Thro' hazy dimness roamed far away,
As far as eye by gleam of stars may see,
While others, thirsting for the proffer'd prize,
Controll'd by Hope, impell'd by Jealousy,
Let unremitting range their watchful eyes.

"The thought I had was one, and this was Night,
Eternal Night with God on the Abyss,
Before the spheres revolved in their height,
When all in Slumber lay and sacred Peace,
Till frighten'd Chaos heard: 'Let there be light!'
When suns did rise and myriad worlds like this.
How deep that Prescience of His deepest plan,
Who all creations usher'd by that beam
That growth insures to ever-growing man,
To brute and plant, which, growing, happy seem!
An attribute divine as old as Time,
Light Wisdom wedded, Beauty was the birth,
Sweet Life had never risen from the slime
By them uncall'd, who heaven cheer and earth.

"This thought, as lightning, darted thro' my brain, A prayer follow'd this uncommon thought, A prayer of anxiety and pain; As lightning far ahead a fire shot, It was no shooting star, I saw it plain, My pulses quicken'd and my head grew hot.— Another flash—it vanish'd as it came. 'Say Pedro,' whisper'd I, 'saw you a light?' He answer'd quick, he saw the transcient flame, Yet was I doubtful, whether we saw right. Night hung upon me, O, for wings to fly! My ardor was as lover's tender greed; Of what avail to one the night-hawk's eye, Devoid of pennons like this bird to speed? Methought I saw another glimmer die, It was enough my hunger's rage to feed.

"If neither cliff nor shore what was it then?
At noon of night no glimmer broke the gloom,
No whisper broke the silence of my men
Till two, when 'Pinta' made her lombard boom;
Then joyous voices rent the dusky air,
Responsive shouts prolong'd the echo's roar;
With land ahead we durst not farther stir,
For there in half-clear outline was a shore.—
I could have sung a sacred hymn of glee,
As he inspired from On High did sing
The great deliverance of the chosen free,
Jehovah's triumph over Egypt's king.
But from above grave Meditation came,

Who in her train prophetic Vision brought; Her solemn musings did my soul inflame, In few small hours I lived a life of thought. Unthought of questions hurried thro' my brain: How strange this life, its problems how complex! Creation call'd her creatures into pain, Will Death and Dissolution pain relax? Why suffers Infancy and withers Youth, There being Love and Justice in the skies? Five thousand years may pass before a truth Can pave her way amid a maze of lies. For once the sphinx her brazen tongue untied, I have the riddle's clue from Silence torn; Contempt and Sapience dauntless I defied, Alone I bore a world's unsparing scorn; I felt that Inspiration never lied, And felt the purpose for which I was born.—

"Yet of the realms before me dark and still,
The habitants thereof, if such there were,
Confusing fancies did a picture fill
In which my sober reason had no share.
Still, for a wonder waited I not less
Than India's Kingdoms, or Xipangu's Isles,
Where kings repose in golden palaces
And gems are hoarded in enormous piles;
Where maidens gather jewels on the shores,
A hundred princes serve the Great Mogul,
Who give their gold to fill his treasure-stores;
How could I dream of aught less wonderful?"

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BOOK XII.

ARGUMENT.

Columbus tells how he landed and took possession of the land, which he describes; how the inhabitants fled and returned; what kind of creatures they are; they mistake the strangers for heavenly beings. He is in doubt about the region. Many beautiful islands in sight, he touches at three of them; hears of Cuba and imagines it to be Xipangu. Landing at Cuba he sends an embassy into the interior; the envoys find the report of a great king and his court a fancy of the natives. Columbus hears of Babeque, Quisqueya, Bohio, and Caritaba, and steers for one of these isles. In a contrary night gale the "Pinta" deserts the other vessels. Description of Cuba. other island supposed to be inhabited by a man-eating race. The Caribs and their terrible depredations. The ships touch at the island; the islanders fly in terror. The beauty of the country. Columbus succeeds in allaying the fear of the denizens who come with offerings. "Hispaniola" is the new name of the isle. How her people are ruled and how they live. Many chieftains visit the Admiral. Following an invitation, the "Santa Maria" proceeds to the place and founders on the way. The help and sympathy of the natives. Seamen propose the building of a fort wherein they volunteer to stay; the fort is built. The departure of Columbus for Spain. He meets the "Pinta." Pinzon's methods. An incident that causes bloodshed. Steering homeward. Terrific storms. The "Pinta" disappears in the dark of night. The mental anguish of the Admiral, who lands at the Azores. A narrow escape. Landing at the mouth of the Tagus. Visit to the Court of King John. Spain's glory. The Monarchs, Columbus, and the Court kneel to praise Heaven.

"IMAGINATION on ethereal wings,
While you, my Lieges, listen to my tale,
A trembling man before my vision brings,
I see the new-made Adam mute and pale

The Western heaven watch with growing fear, Lest yonder orb that glory sheds and gold On Eden's meadow, never re-appear, As now he sets, and things grow dark and cold. What must his joy have been when, rising new, He saw the East with blushing radiance glow, Beheld the sun burst on his dazed view, The beam enlivening all the realms below! Like him my heart throbb'd happy when at last The morrow's gray foretoken'd passing night, Aurora threw her blushes on the mast, Sweet Nature smiling woke, for there was light. And as the sphere ascended from the East Three armed boats Spain's banner to the shore Myself in scarlet robed, as for a feast, With high liturgic song in triumph bore, The seaman chanting anthems like a priest, Or like a pilgrim gleeful to the core, As if in progress toward a sacred shrine With riddance promis'd from debasing Sin; We felt as the Elect of Grace Divine Who, soaring Godward, holy works begin.

"Campania boasts on the Tyrrhenian Sea
That Pan his bounties lavish'd all on her;
Tho' born and bred in fairest Italy
I do herewith unprepossessed declare,
That no spot under heaven that I know
Where orchards blossom by Pomona's hand,
And fruit is glowing with Hesperian glow,

Where Ceres guards the harvests of the land, Did I delicious draughts like those inhale Which, on our landing, braced every sense; Yea, nowhere such delightful airs prevail, Such musky winds, such sweet exuberance, As on that coast, which cool'd my thirsty soul; In tears I knelt Almighty's Grace to bless, Who hath youchsafed me the blessed goal, The others knelt in tearful gratefulness, Our altar was the shore, the priests were all. The land I courted with an ardent kiss Before I had Hispania possess That virgin beauty with a sense of bliss, A garden fair of the Hesperides.— The sword unsheathed, the notary at hand, The men attendant gather'd in a ring, I named Iberia mistress of the land Beneath the standards of her Queen and King; Then for myself I strict allegiance claimed, The oath of fealty each one had to swear, The titles naming which my Sovereigns named, And which by writ with honors due I bear. This act and ceremony on the shore Gave unction to my station as Viceroy; Forthwith the isle I call'd San Salvador Mid shouts of triumph and elating joy.

[&]quot;Meanwhile that swarm of creatures dark and nude Who at our coming fleeing disappeared, Slow re-emerged from the shady wood,

Long-haired, sayage, with no sign of beard, Yet shapely and fair-eyed, with not a trace Of Afric's black in feature or in hair; Tattoos unsightly tainted frame and face Of male and female, copper-skinned and bare. Their utmost wonder plain expression found In mien and gesture and bewilder'd look; They show'd us homage prostrate on the ground, Adoring men whom they for gods mistook; And undeterred, as children acting free, Their boldest ventured to approach us near Enough to gratify Curiosity, Tho' trembling like the half-confiding deer. They thought our caravels were living things That from the skies descended during night, Prodigious monsters of enormous wings That brought us thither from celestial height With gifts for them; and some believed we rose On those huge creatures from the crystal wave, On them, poor things, a tribute to impose, Wherefore they fled themselves and wives to save; A harmless race and healthy, like those few I have imported from the new domain; Thus tribes unknown, unheard of hitherto Are now the subjects of your Catholic Spain.

[&]quot;And as the patriarch in Mamre's grove, Who at his threshold waited for a guest, God's angels welcomed with a feast of love, Solicitous of serving them his best,

So they, undoubtful of our heavenly birth, Propitious offerings before us laid Of all those things they value most on earth, And thought themselves abundantly repaid By worthless trinkets given in return, Imagining the gifts were of the sky, Whose virtues by the smell they would discern And then run off in rapturous ecstasy. Metallic sounds, as of a jingling bell, A mighty charm hath for the Indian's ear; Whoever heard it yielded to the spell, Indulging madly in a wild career Of dancing, leaping, ravish'd with delight, And crying turray, turray! meaning sky, They feeling sure, that but in Azure's height Alone such notes are heard, such symphony.

"San Salvador no precious metal yields,
But fruits untasted elsewhere ripen here
In shady groves amid broad cotton fields
Hemm'd in by forests, green throughout the year,
While flocks of parrots furnish dainty meals,
With fish updrawn from crystal streams and lakes;
A patch of yucca every native tills
Of which a food cassaba call'd he bakes.

"Such are his wants, and such is his supply,
Unyoked by Want he lives in idle ease,
His bed the turf, his canopy the sky,
Foreign to toil, he knows no luxuries.

No envy rankles where no greed lays claim To aught save necessaries of the day; Here Malice wakes not, Slander hath no game, And Patience knows nor Hurry nor Delay. What boon is ours dispensed with by them Whose dream of Childhood is the dream of Age? Who, strangers to Cabal and Stratagem, Escape the torments of Ambition's rage? Tho' unredeemed a Spirit they adore And hope to reach their parents thro' the grave, Who live on flesh and send forevermore Those hollow echoes ringing from the cave.— And what a region this? It was in vain We tried by syllables to gather more Than names of islands many utter'd plain And, pointing southward, named, among a score, A kingdom where the king held pompous court, And whence invaders, powerful and bold, With slaughter visited each isle and port, Of nothing fonder than of slaves and gold. That ruler must Xipangu's monarch be, None other could indulge such royal state; None others save the swarms of Tartary, I thought, could thus the islands depredate. To know San Salvador and straight depart In quest of other lands was now my plan; I had Xipangu and Cathay at heart, Hispania's message to the greatest Khan. A short survey along the coast did prove

The island's wealth and beauty more and more,

Since brook and river, lake and mead and grove,
And harbors guarded by a rocky shore,
A picture made a painter to enchant;
If Eden was a fairer land than this
It was the garden God Himself did plant
For man's delight, it was the seat of bliss.

"As in the moonless Azure stars excel
Each other's brilliance to the eye that would
Select the brightest, as no man may tell
The grandest sphere in vast Infinitude;
So tempted by the isles I nearest saw
In tropic colors rich and sylvan shade,
I felt my thirst for twenty others grow
The native guides in various quarters laid;
But chiefly for that far-reputed isle
Where golden vessels grace the kingly board,
A thousand maids the ruler's time beguile,
A hundred vassals feed his jewel'd hoard.

"Within four days, the islands being near,
I took possession of the largest three
And gave them names good Catholics revere
Whose faith is deep and awe of Majesty;
The one, a maiden region with a smile
Of Flora's graces spread on field and wood
I named 'Conception,' vesting in this isle
The emblem of Saint Mary's motherhood;
As Andalusia green when fresh in Spring,
The other, hung with fruit and blossom, shone,

Symbolic of my Liege, Hispania's King, She is henceforth as 'Fernandina' known. But where expression find to paint the third Where Nature of her paragons displayed In spice and herb and flower and singing bird, Her groves in bloom perennially arrayed? Here not a leaf reminded me of Spain; Who could the names of fruit or blossom tell? The fragrant wood and leafage who explain As odd in shape as marvelous in smell? My ignorance gave me a sense of pain; This isle, my Queen, I baptiz'd 'Isabel.' Her denizens to those resemblance bore Who at our landing did their awe express; Except a few, who cotton mantles wore, They unconcerned lived in nakedness. Whatever hand may give they offer'd free, As homage given beings from on high, Accepting trifles with a childish glee, As the assured it all came from the sky.

"Strange beings we, yea, strange in every trait,
Dissatisfied, however rich and free;
We long and hope to pass thro' Eden's gate
And scorn an Eden's sweet simplicity
When met below, which we too lightly rate;
As if the soul Salvation found in pelf,
The race for gold ideal Manhood soils;
Ay, blind the man who thus degrades himself,
The Lord's high purpose in his being foils!

Alas, for Wisdom! nor am I the best

Among the erring of the human kind,

For when I heard of Cuba West-South-West,

I thither steered fabled hoards to find;

A rich domain abounding in the ore

Of precious metal stored in hammer'd bars,

Where king and queen such burning sapphires wore

As would at night outshine the brilliant stars.

"Thus much by signs the Indians did convey To me, who had Xipangu in my brain; Who else but she, the rival of Cathay, Contesting of ther powers on the main? Three days we sail'd, when in the distance clear That island's lofty mountains rose to sight; At first I thought, that Sicily was near. The peaks attaining her majestic height; Superbly ranging farther than the eye Could follow up the zig-zags of the crest; Above them soars that carrion bird of prey Who in unclean recesses builds his nest. 'Juana' her I named, the noblest she Of all the islands Christian sovereigns rule, It were but justice to her scenery To name her Grand, and call her Beautiful. An empire in extent she seems one crown Of rainbow tints and intertangled jewels; There Winter bides not, Autumn wears no frown, But after Spring, unbroken Summer rules. Mellifluous warbling birds enchant the eye;

On some the feathers like enamel shine, While others blaze as lightning when they fly From flower to flower on pinions berylline. In glitter robed the insects light the eve, As living gems adorning shrub and tree; Flamingo flocks in glen and forest live, Here trills the nightingale her melody.— How of her countless herbs the sweetest glean, Describe her balms, the flavors of her fruits? Within her woods the stately palm is queen, A race may live on her nutritious roots. A magic realm it is the fairies hold Who moonlight charm into Elysian peace; Her silver glories rival those of gold, The flowing song and fragrance never cease. Earth hath no land which I, now growing old, Would as a sojourn preference give to this; Tho' much I said, I leave two-thirds untold Of this great realm, believe me, Majesties.

"I saw enough and heard to nurse my dream,
That I was coasting up Xipangu's shore;
Enchantment brooded over lake and stream,
Such wondrous things I never saw before
As lambent fishes of resplendent hues,
Which gliding sparkled in the lustrous tides;
Here drinks the oyster Heaven's pearly dews
And breeds that jewel Ceylon's Ocean hides.
But man is wild; our coming made him flee
His thatched habitations bare and rude,

Relinquishing his arts of low degree, The carved idol and the mask of wood; Yet what he built show'd sense of symmetry, A skillful hand in executions crude. Thus coasting westward, landing here and there, Interminable tracts in tropic bloom— The brook or river flowing everywhere— Dispelling Doubt, made for Conviction room, That here the Orient's Eastern regions lay, The Mongol's border washed by the sea, Perchance a vassalage of Great Cathay, Belike the fisher's belt of Tartary. Sky-bearing Atlas on his massive base, Mons Calpe's rock, and Mount Abyla's peak; Sierra Nevada in perpetual blaze, The Bosphorus and Suez no more bespeak The continental magnitude within Than Cuba doth approached from the main; An endless empire does here begin, A world of wonders for imperial Spain.— The 'Ocean's River,' I a harbor named Which, as new silver, did in moonlight gleam; As Guadalquivir in tale and ballad famed, In dreamy silence rolls that mighty stream Mid flowery clusters, orange-grove and palm; Here, seeking shelter from an adverse gale, Six days we bode in undisturbed calm, The richness testing of the blooming vale, Where amorous warblers sing the sweetest Psalm, Unnamed plants delicious balms exhale.

We soon held intercourse with such as came
When reassured, an offering in hand
Of fruit or bread, or some unslaughter'd game,
Or other produce of a blessèd land;
But precious metals there were none to see,
No ring, nor bracelet, nor a grain of gold,
Which flow'd as tribute into the treasury
Of Cublay Khan, a knowing Indian told.

"Informed further, that within four days
An envoy could go thither and return
Where on his throne the Khan his kingdom sways,
I sent an embassy the truth to learn;
The Hebrew Torres, versed in Oriental lore
And many tongues unspoken in our day,
Was of the mission chief Ambassador,
Spain's friendly message wisely to convey
To him, who rules supreme in his domain;
The other, Perez, was to give report,
By close observing information gain,
And stand the second envoy at the court.

"They found no capital, there was no prince,
A village was the largest seat they saw;
The inland dwellers did that state evince
Of life primeval built on Nature's law;
The Hebrew's learning was of no avail,
There being none to know a word of his,
It was the Indian guide who told the tale
Of our descent from skies of heavenly bliss

With bags of presents for poor mortals here;
Whereat the elders did their reverence show
And others came to worship and to fear
The blessed visitors who deigned below
Thus graciously among them to appear.
One wore a plume, else naked like the rest,
No other token marking him as head;
Yet they around him made it manifest,
That in all matters he the elders led.
All things were plentiful, except the one
In search of which man disembowels the earth;
They look'd in vain for gold or precious stone,
And with the envoys I deplored the dearth.

"A child of dreams, a star was my desire For which my mother counsel'd me to pray To Him whose garment radiates light and fire, Who gives the righteous worlds of bliss to sway, When, having pray'd, as tho' the will was mine To choose and keep the fairest orb on high, I would each eve the one I chose resign, Select another, doubt my choice and sigh. This mood of Childhood ruled the earnest man Whom regions weird to several islands lured; Blind Hazard led, a substitute for plan, When Indian babble left me unassured.— Intelligible speech, good Lord, how dear The utterance of Knowledge sought in vain In sounds that grate and rattle on the ear, In lieu of pleasure, give a touch of pain!

If Cuba be no paradise below There is no Eden hidden in the seas; But of her wealth what trophies could I show, Her grandeur proving to Your Majesties? How could, I reasoned, lands so rich and great, A hundred isles, the least a king's delight. Unclaimed stand, unsceptred vegetate, Unvielding fealty to some ruler's might? Uncrown'd my Quest, my triumph incomplete With Babeque and Quisqueya unexplored; I should the monarch of Bohio meet, And see the Court of Caritaba's lord, Whose hoards were marvelous, I did infer From native tales in signs and words expressed; The Pinzons did my sanguine fancies share To see the princes of those races blessed.

"To East-South-East along the Cuban shore
Our squadron battled with a wrathful sea,
The groves and meadows blooming evermore
Upon the coast in wild luxuriancy.
My Quest was Babeque to the eastward laid,
A royal island under princely rule,
The noblest she of all, the Indians said,
Than Cuba grander, vast and wonderful.

"The winds blew contrary, mad fumed the wave When, turning thither, we the Ocean faced; Thrice beaten landward, I, the ships to save, Toward night a fourth time my career retraced; But of our vessels 'Pinta' was not there, Nor answer'd signals hoisted her to guide; Her disappearance was my grievous care, For I suspected Martin Pinzon's pride, Subordination seeming hard to bear By one in habit to command and chide. Might not such breach of Loyalty involve A daring scheme of plunder or of gain? A night's reflection quicken'd my resolve To end my Quest and hurry back to Spain.— Three farewell days on Cuban soil we spent, Three weeks our wonderment incessant grew, Each fertile zone her vernal glories lent To make her mistress of the isles I knew. If eye and heart could speech their mirror make My words enchanting splendors here unroll'd; The beryl river and the silver lake, The flowery clusters and the groves of gold, Unmeaning seem where tides, as Azure's blue, Reveal their secrets fifty fathoms deep: Where Nature bathes in a sea of dew, In robes of jasmine sleeps her virgin sleep. Eight score of men I saw in one canoe, The hollow of one trunk thus fitted well; Yet larger trees in Cuba's forests grow Than this, too large for savage skill to fell. Were I a dullard I had scarce withstood Majestie Beauty in her maiden dream, That shone, as Iris in her plenitude, From hill and valley, meadow, wood and stream; At every turn the wonder-scenes renewed, For Cuba's landscape doth with wonders teem.— South-West the coast bent, eastward sail we spread, Still thirsting for a sight of some great isle; The land we sighted fill'd our guides with dread. Who cried: 'Bohio!' meaning in their style A golden realm; but in the selfsame breath Their gestures show'd their horror of the coast, Where one-eyed fiends the stranger bleed to death, His blood devour, on coal his carcass roast.— Well-known the Caribs, terror of each shore, Man-eating monsters, swallowing their prey; Who dreaded not their revelries of gore, Whose thirst for carnage blood can scarce allay? With none at peace, with everyone at war, The tiger's lust impels them life to slav. One isle they favor bold viragos rule, Grim Amazons they visit once a year, Then claim the male-brood when the age is full, Leaving the females to the mother's care; But male and female heavy weapons wield, The poison'd arrow send with deadly speed; With club or sword cuirass cleave, helm and shield. Devour the foe and revel in the deed.— Let Fiction garland her incredible lore With fair Calypsos dwelling in some cave, Make shrewd Ulysses roam from shore to shore, Fell Scylla frustrate or Charibdis brave, Then send him trembling to Cimmerian dark Where Phlegethon's infernal torrents hiss;

Or boat with Charon, hear Cerberus bark;
These olden tales are fit for nurseries;
But facts are mine, realities I state,
Responsible for all details I give
Of marvels words cannot exaggerate,
Things all may see, who slow are to believe.

"Might not Xipangu's yonder mountains be
Whereon sweet Heaven mellow brightness pours?
Or dwells thereon some monstrous prodigy
That feeds on him cast on those summy shores?
'Among the fairest thou wouldst yet seem fair,
So stately built, so lofty and so green!
What pity if thou art the Carib's lair,
Of all the islands thou the bloody queen!'
Thus to myself, attempting to retain
A vivid picture of the queenly isle;
Her coast resembles Andalusian Spain
In Springtide, beaming as an infant's smile.

"Into a harbor on the Western end
Our vessels enter'd, as the day did pass;
Sweet waters feed it, flowing from the land,
I named the haven 'Port Saint Nicholas.'
The river meanders thro' a valley's core
Before its tide the Ocean tribute pays;
Its yellow sands are glittering with ore,
The sparkling gravel golden grains betrays;
A shrill alarm thro' glen and thicket rung,
Voice echoed voice, then sound and echo died;

On distant heights the warning column sprung
Of smoke and flame, the fires multiplied;
Day broke on reaches thick with fruit and flower,
A tropic radiance gilded every scene,
From herb and leafage dew fell in a shower
Of pearly drops upon enamel'd green;
But, saving bird and insect, life was rare,
Untenanted the native village lay;
Off to his forests fled the islander,
It useless were to lengthen here our stay;
Spain's sacred emblem thus I planted there,
And bade our vessels heave out of the bay.

"This island's North attention close I gave, Too much for one to muster at a glance; Transparent waters blooming regions lave, Majestic palms the sylvan charms enhance; Such havens as we enter'd or pass'd by, Such vernal richness filling valleys broad As show'd unjealous to the passing eye Their wealth unvalued, meads perchance untrod Since man makes record and the ages fly, Could pleasure give a goddess or a god. But here no Circe no Calvpso dwelled, Nor any Cyclopean monstrous brood; A damsel caught the seaman's fear dispelled, They lighted on her straying in the wood; The creature trembled, moaning in distress— A stately female she of native grace; I had with garments clothed her nakedness,

Adorned her and, learning of her place,
I caused that eve two Indians bring her near
The village which appear'd her husband's home,
She never doubting, that her showy gear
Good angels wrought in the celestial dome.

"Would God I could this world with faith imbue, Man's heart we need to have him, brain and all, For love is faith in virtue pure and true; The faithful stumble, but the faithless fall. Why come they not, those visions old and sweet, The mystic ladder and the bush ablaze? Why did the ancient's gods or angels meet, As the endow'd with superhuman gaze, Whilst in our days by fagot, fire and screw The faith of Christ Your Majesties uphold? Why doth to Christian, Musselman and Jew No revelation the true Faith unfold As in the times when man from Sinai heard The Voice of God and did on manna live, When signs from Azure warned those who err'd, What else could they but things they saw believe? Yet God is there and there His wonders are. Tho' miracles are unperformed now: His fire-pillars shoot from star to star, Earth, sea and sky His Majesty avow, The dew-drop telling as the rainbow's arch, How all creations one design fulfill; The hosts pursue their empyrean march In the beginning fired by His Will.

Their faith was deep, who in our Sacred Lore
Uncurtain'd Heaven's Infinity of Light;
Their insight piercèd matters to the core;
To them with Faith came spiritual Sight;
A grosser age is ours, too gross to see
Almighty's Finger in things great and small;
Therefore those eyes of Greed and Vacancy
We see in sockets uninspired roll.

"Scarce had gray Dawn unveil'd the Orient's face,
The Eastern welkin nascent light unroll'd,
Auroral flashes shooting thro' the space,
Tipping the peaks with scarlet and with gold,
When serried files of natives shy and nude,
Our vessels seeking, swarmed on the shore,
While other crowds from thicket, hill and wood
The former joined, eager to adore
Immortal beings who before them stood,
Angelic guests undream'd of heretofore.

"And, ere the morrow's fullness crown'd the day,
I made assertion of Hispania's claim,
Five thousand Indians nearby prostrate lay
When 'Hispaniola' got her Gothic name;
So homelike sweet, so fascinating fair,
So like the choicest seat of sunny Spain,
I could the loss of any country bear,
Free shelter granted in this isle's domain,
Where fruit and blossom flourish round the year,
Saturnian plenty burdens mount and plain.

If man untempted paradise this day
Could as a gift of Heaven's Goodness claim,
He would, I doubt not, but an Eden sway
With 'Hispaniola' to dispute the name;
And those who dwell therein, how happy they,
Who scarce a passion have to curb or tame.
Chivalrous hosts, tho' naked and untaught,
Who pleasure found in giving what they gave
With lavish hand, if but the eye was caught
The stranger cast on things his heart did crave.

"Invited thither I a village saw
Of thousand houses, shaded well and neat;
A chieftain met me here with reverend awe
And sate with me, an escort at his feet;
The belt he gave me and the mask are here,
My gifts he treasured as a heavenly boon;
He touch'd my hands with reverence and fear,
And shared my meal and wine that afternoon,
He parted bowing, in his eye a tear,
As one who must, but would not go too soon;
A prelude this to such an homage high
As mortals pay to none of earthly mold;
Our presence, deem'd a favor of the sky,
Drew thanks of joy and offerings of gold.—

"Such fruit bears Faith, intensest in its glow When uninflamed its ardor blazes free Referring wiser men, who fail to know All being's goal, to the Great Mystery.

"Cacique the title native rulers bear; Unlimited in power, they sustain The Princely Dignity with royal care And yoke their subjects with a gentle reign, Their territories ranging in extent From petty manors to a king's domain. Wherein they roam about and victuals plant, Else free to all, who friendly come to bide And share in common what the soil affords: No landmarks here the mine from thine divide. No iron master over servants lords: A child's obedience and a parent's will The tribe's relation to their chief portray; Like shaded brooks their weeks and seasons rill Amid the blossoms of a lifelong May. Where in this hemisphere, my Sovereigns, where In those dominions undisputed great, Are millions thus relieved of toilsome care, Thus dreaming idly in the pristine state Of man unfallen, childlike true and plain, Unplagued by Want, untroubled in the breast By real Sorrow or imagined pain, As if theirs were the Islands of the Blest?

"By land and water messengers of peace
Arrived hourly, thirsting for a sight
Of things and beings from the spheres of bliss,
None doubting our descent from Azure's height.
What chief's petition to the rest prefer
Who came with shows of hospitable zeal;

Each one, to see his way our vessels stir, Made humble offer, prayerful appeal. I had my choice and gave the envoy ear Whose numerous train bespoke a chieftain's might, Who ask'd, that we before his coast appear, Who would our coming welcome with delight; And, lest we doubt the kindness of the host, The presents brought a kingly sense betray'd; Might his not be Xipangu's famous coast And hoarded wealth inferior vassals paid? 'Cibao,' current on the native lip, This fond illusion foster'd in my brain; I saw a godsend in the envoyship, But stress of weather did my will restrain; It were unsafe to eause a fragile ship Encounter billows of an angry main.

"Wherever I set foot or spent an hour Intruders will a warning trace descry,
All emblematic of Hispania's power,
And all familiar to the Christian eye.
The gales relaxing I cut short the stay,
Our sails, inflated by a softer breeze,
The harbor left I named St. Thomas Bay,
And steered eastward the eacique to please;
For tidings brought by them I thither sent,
Enjoin'd sharply to return with eve,
Described him of a generous temperament,
A kindly Chief, who deign'd them to receive
With cordial good will and in princely style;

Unready with his heavenly guests to part
He tried his best their hurry to beguile,
The motive being a magnanimous heart;
But, finding them unchangeable in mind,
He made an escort lead them to the shore
With parrots loaded of a native kind,
With gold and cotton robes of his own store.
Thus prepossessed for this friendly lord
I made the breezes waft our vessels there;
The sun descended as I stood on board
The 'Santa Maria' guarded by my care.

"That Eve it was, the sweetest of the year, The Christian's happiest, who doth believe In God's Messiah who our pains did share For man's redemption; it was Christmas Eve When Age and Youth are blended in a glee, Innumerable chimes hosanna ring, Ring out the Lord's immutable decree, That man be saved by Judah's baby king; When Hell, wide-yawning since the birth of Sin, Her portals closes thro' that holier birth By which mankind's new era did begin, Progressive cycles for the sons of earth. Betwixt the parts we cradle call and grave On Life's high-sea the winds our vessel steer. With Faith as pilot we can tempest brave, And close in peace a righteous career; By Christ restored, man, forever safe, Need neither Satan nor Pedition fear.

"By Slumber and Exhaustion overcome, Reclining in my seat I dream'd and slept; A vision took me to my mother's home Where on my head a blessing hand she kept; Her hand was cold, its weight was cumbersome, Gloom hung on her, she look'd at me and wept; Her falling tears a rain of jewels turned, As lava hot the blood rush'd thro' my veins, Methought a furnace in my bosom burned, I felt unbearable my mother's pains; Wherefore these tears? I asked her and learned No more than this: 'My son, thy chains, thy chains!' 'My chains!' I cried, when off the image fled, Her figure melting as a thing of air, Another picture rising in her stead— My Felipa again, superbly fair, A flaming nimbus round her beauteous head, The lustre burnishing her golden hair; She, unforgotten, shares among the dead Seraphic Beatitude, her blissful share. Her eye caught mine when, under some great spell, Ethereal lightness broke my body's weight Which, as a cumbrous load, around me fell, I felt my spirit's disembodied state. And, as from cannon's mouth the loosen'd shell The distance seeks at an enormous rate; Or, as imprison'd fire, breaking way, The ruling law of gravity defies And, scorning matter's overwhelming sway, With light's velocity to heaven flies,

So, unimpeded by the massive frame,
With her I climb'd the incorporeal space,
An awful height mid blazing light of flame
My guide selected as our resting place.

"'Thy world, Christopher, of the hemispheres
This younger half,' she said, 'with care survey;
She will the greatest be in coming years
And be the freest empire for aye;
Great kingdoms by their monarchs ruled and peers
Her favor'd Chief shall sovereign homage pay;
Distress and Hunger shall here dry their tears,
Her humblest sons no tyrant shall obey;
A world of peace and harvests, they afar
Who bear Oppression's yoke shall call her blest,
The peaceful half of this unpeaceful star;
Thy world, Christopher, this, behold thy West
Henceforward open; thou didst break the bar
Withstanding vainly thy triumphant Quest.'

"Hereat the eye with piercing sight endow'd

A hemisphere between two rolling seas
Surveyed, as the the vision of a god

The power gave me over distances
Immeasureable, built up, with space for more

Than all the empires of Asia hold;
In width a thousand leagues from shore to shore,

It seem'd an Eden bathed in streams of gold.—

As from a cliff that overlangs a deep

Of rushing waters one may watch and see

The boat and raft adown the river sweep, And all thereon pass with rapidity, So from our station wondering I saw Continuous stretches fleet before mine eye; I seem'd to see a world on wheels below, On roads of steel palatial dwellings fly, Thro' tunnel'd mountains running, or ascend Acclivities by some mysterious might; Of populous cities there appear'd no end, They hurried by and faded out of sight. An ominous shadow vast as the expanse From sea to sea inwrapp'd the world in night; The darkness crept in masses black and dense And, like a monster, swallow'd life and light. Fear seized my soul, around me all was dead, I heard a wailing voice, and then a moan— Then dreadful silence—my companion fled— Then came a shock, a shiver and a groan: 'Our ship, our ship!' they cried; I raised my head— To find my vessel on a shallow thrown!

"Too late to save the ship—perfidious watch,
That went to sleep the moment I withdrew!
And off they run who carned sharp reproach,
Confusion seizing the confounded crew.
Help came in time; the 'Niña's' craft was near,
No help for 'Santa Maria' sunk in sand;
We did our utmost the doom'd ship to steer,
The breakers proving mightier than the hand;
She sunk in dark, I shed for her a tear,

Who could unwept see his best vessel strand!
Unseamed in part the currents fill'd her hull,
She lay aground embedded on her side
By watchmen wrecked who, undutiful,
Left her adrift upon a treacherous tide.

"It was a true, an unaffected grief Guacanagari show'd at my distress; His was the sorrow of a generous Chief Whose actions proved the love he did profess. Canoes and men he sent to our relief, And did his guards into our service press; They saved the wreck, they landed all her gear, Yet was I sad, my noblest ship was lost, Soon came the chief his cheerless guest to cheer, My sadness was unbearable to my host Whose liquid eye Compassion's sacred flow Sent forth in pearls invaluable to me; Far more than rubies, which as fire glow, I price those pearls of human sympathy. O, Love divine! untaught and yet how deep! Ingrafted ofttimes on the simplest soul; If our great sorrows make the angels weep, The angels are unvisited by Dole; Their dearest perish not with Death to sleep, Nor have they taste of what we anguish call; But man who fathoms every deep of woe, Himself a child of perishable clod, If he find tears on others to bestow, It shows him kindred to the loving God.

"Wild people they but noble to the core, A nobler kind did never tread the earth, And, tho' the most of them no garments wore, They acted like the noblemen of birth, Their Chieftain foremost in demeanor stood, In every feature dignified was he; I say not much in saying they are good, And courteous, too, like men of chivalry. The neighbor's love their gentle manners teach, On Nature's table prince and people feed; Superfluous here man's brotherhood to preach Where man is foreign to the cruel deed; Where Theft and Lie no cause have to exist, The daily wants are satisfied with ease; Where he who at his fellow shakes a fist The earmark bears as breaker of the peace.

"The feast and sport were now the Chieftain's care,
Who tax'd his arts to entertain his guest,
Of masks and coronets the princes wear
He gave me six of each, and these his best;
And when of shining boots he got a pair,
A silver ring, a mantle and a vest,
His eyes dilated with extreme surprise
At gifts so precious, which I freely gave,
Things cherub envies cherub in the skies
And priceless here, because too rare to have.
So thought the Chief, so every native thought
Who for a hawk-bell handfuls gave of gold,
Still deeming the elixir cheaply bought

That would the outlay treble, if resold;

For nothing could the ravishment excel

Of him who, dancing to an Indian air,

With rapture heard the jingling of the bell

That made the blood of thousand natives stir.

"I wonder'd little at their earnest plea, Who sought permission on the isle to stay, To build a fort and mount a battery Of 'Santa Maria's' wrecks, which useless lay; And, tho' unprompted rashly to agree How could I irrefutable facts gainsay— Prospective dangers—and these not a few— Should some mischance befall us on the wave When, overcrowded by a doubled crew, The chances dwindled ship and men to save? The Chief consented, that a fortress rise, When told it was the Carib to deter From rayging his country by surprise, Henceforth entrusted to our safer care; His good will granted, help was underied; A native multitude with lusty grip The pick and shovel, axe and hammer plied— Uprose a castle from a wrecked ship. Impregnable 'La Navidad' appeared, The cannon boomed at her 'Nativity,' 'La Navidad!' a name the Spaniard cheered, Smoke-wreathen thunder belch'd o'er hill and tree. The frighten'd natives the explosion feared, Some fell astonish'd, I saw others flee,

Like birds that scatter at a strange report;
But, reassured, no foe would them annoy,
Thus guarded by the terrors of the fort,
Their fright subsided, giving place to joy.

"The hour of parting was an hour of pain; To think of them—but thirty-nine in all— Thus sever'd from their country by a main With no resources, should the fortress fall. How easy could the bravest come to grief, Should Caonabo on their fort descend A myriad strong, and he a sullen Chief, The warlike lord of wooded rocks and land! Arana holds the power them to lead, Who gather'd round me to receive advice; To shun indulgences which ill-will breed, Respect the Chief, and guard against surprise, Sum up my counsel at the parting hour. A feast of honor the cacique I gave, Once more the lombard bellow'd from the tower, My quick departure made the Chieftain grave, Who promise made to do all in his power For them who stayed with him his foes to brave.

"Hard was the parting, but it had to be,
Pathetic was the last, the close embrace
Of them who faced the hazards of the sea,
And those remaining nameless fears to face;
For who on shore could Safety guarantee
To strangers cast amidst a savage race?

Mine was a sadness not unmix'd with joy,

The cannon's boom was music to my ear,
And sweeter still the mariner's 'ahoy!'

That made the 'Niña' budge and eastward steer;
Sure it was time, lest Accident destroy

The precious fruitage of my life's eareer,
That I stood homeward chary of delay

The older world a newer one to give,
Her wondrous men and products to display,

That they who doubted may their eyes believe.—

Antiquity, as far as knowledge runs,

No venture tells in story or in rhyme,

And ages to uprise with rising suns,

Will never tell such tale another time

As this; a ship unfraught with precious store; Yet if twelve tons of sapphires were my freight

I deem'd them less a trust than what I bore—

A world's discovery, long withheld by Fate!

The winds, the gales, the currents of the air,

How them control to make my fragile ship

With winged speed the precious tidings bear Athwart the surges of the shoreless deep!

Alone! if lost what loss for Spain and me!

Unhappy thought, to perish thus unfamed, To see oneself a man of Destiny

And sink, perchance, a fool and braggart named! With Pinzon and the 'Pinta' and her crew,

Now that my vessel founder'd, I should have Two caravels, the cheer and help of two,

And brighter hopes my labor's fruit to save.—

The 'Pinta!' sure I heard the 'Pinta's' name,
As the 'it was an echo of my thought;
'The "Pinta" hoy!' clear from the masthead came,
The watchman sighted her—she is affoat!

"No lip, my Sovereigns, should dishonor Fame, Nor manly Hardihood, nor Zeal dispraise, But Martin Pinzon's ways I have to blame, His word and deed betray'd a double-face, A lack of manhood and a want of shame, My soul is loath to utter his disgrace, Who to my gratitude can raise a claim. The devil Mammon, Satan's basest tool, This glossy liar, who mankind misleads, In every province combats Virtue's rule, Deception fosters and on Honor feeds, The prudent Pinzon into error led, His instinct waking of insatiate Greed; It was for lucre he my presence fled, His vessel using of superior speed. By chance I landed on the selfsame shore Where weeping parents for their children cried He unreluctant from their bosoms tore Despite of gold they in exchange supplied; And, tho' I made him the young ones restore, He red with fury my command defied.— Remained for me to hasten my return, His friends were many, wellnigh all the crew, His haughty manner gave me great concern, I durst no longer thus my Quest pursue.

Provision'd well, our water-casks to fill
Our boats proceeded up a limpid flood
That pour'd as crystal from a wooded hill—
To mingle soon with native human blood.

"Men fierce and hideous there in ambush lay
With bows and arrows and enormous swords,
As if our men to capture or to slay,
They broke on them untwining heavy cords;
In self-defense the seamen had to fight,
Two Indians fell transpierced by the steel,
The others found Security in flight,
With many a bruise and a hurt to heal.
Who else but Caribs this ferocious tribe,
Unsightly creatures, powerful in frame?
No trinket their ferocity could bribe,
Men-eating monsters of terrific fame.

Yet unexpected, with undaunted mien,
Next early morning, ere we anchor weigh'd,
Their Chief appeared with no sign of spleen,
My presence sought and humbly homage paid,
As the regretful of the treacherous act
That led to bloodshed on the previous day;
He left a coronet of gold compact,
Ate bread and honey, bow'd and went his way;
When all aboard made ready for the sea,
The 'Niña' hove, the 'Pinta' stretch'd her sail;
I sunk my weight upon a bended knee,
Imploring Heaven, that kindly winds prevail.

"If man be great as he presumes to be, Let him on land his boastful claim sustain. But on the stormy deeps how helpless he, Who, tossed about, finds all his cunning vain, And must acknowledge his impotency When left to struggle with an adverse main. Who counts the days which stealthily pass by, Or counts the weeks that fleeting come and pass? To one at home the moons unnoticed fly, The season's change is seen by changing grass; But on the sea the hours are dull and slow. The minutes creep, the days are long indeed; The lingering Sundays unregretted go, Life crawls unrelish'd, Time restrains her speed; And when fierce gales in opposition blow The mariner must Patience make his creed.— Three-fourths, I judged, of Atlantic's vast Our vessels traversed in a forty days, When from the North-West bursting, sweeping fast, A threatening tempest darken'd Nature's face, Then flash'd the lightning, swept the furious blast; Majestic Ocean thunder'd thro' the space; His broken billows leaping to the mast Admonish'd us to kneel and pray for grace.— Three days and nights the tempest-smitten main With raving fury broke the seething wave; Toward eve I thought all human effort vain Mid yawning gulfs my ship or crew to save: The whelming storm became a hurricane, Atlantic's deep appear'd my destined grave.

"A frightful night; the elements run mad;
The 'Pinta' gone! perhaps to come no more;
My foremast broken, and the canvas spread
To keep us floating crazy furies tore.

A chaos of a night! and what a day!

A rage below, a deluge from above;

A bleak horizon streak'd with dark and gray; As if great Neptune with the Titans strove,

The churned surges, capp'd with flying spray,

In frenzied mountains from the bottom hove And on each other with such fury fell,

As beast on beast when grappling in despair; To be thus menaced by a boiling hell

Was more, your Majesties, than I could bear.

'If I escape,' I vow'd, 'the tempest's rage

I will bare-footed seek the Virgin's shrine.

The crew agreed to make this pilgrimage, We knew our succor must be Help Divine;

And, lest my record be effaced with me,

A parchment in a barrel told the tale, Directed to Iberia's Majesty,

And thus entrusted to the sea and gale.—

A miracle, and nothing less it is,

That we survived that sea-upheaving storm:

That I am here before Your Majesties Inhaling vital air, alive and warm,

Is God's great wonder, who myself did spare For such a happy, such a glorious hour;

Well must I Jonah's thankful prayer share,
For the Abyss had over me no power.

"There was a break in the tempestuous cloud, Tho' unabating yet the tempest blew; The heavens were their melancholy shroud, Did he not err, the boatswain of the crew, Whose ery of land was just as dear to me As when it sounded many weeks before, The signal then of my discovery, My life's high end, my fame forevermore? It was an island, everyone could see, Whatever land, thank Heaven, it was a shore. How land against the frenzy of the blast! A coast, and near, and still in danger we; It seem'd the tempest would forever last, Forever toss us on a raging sea; For, when approaching land, we anchor cast The moorings gave us no security.

"What came to pass thereafter my report
Imparted fully to Your Majestics;
King John received me princely at his Court,
It was his fault he did my service miss,
The error his with Earnestness to sport,
Debasing Royalty by infamies.
Suspicion guarded me at the Azores
Against the snares of Castañeda's guile;
His ways were dark, his dealings might be worse,
Had I incautious landed on his isle.
The dread of shipwreck on a crazy sea
In face of Cintra's harbor made me yield
To my despondent crew reluctantly;

Against the storm, I made that rock our shield, Distrustful the, lest jealous Portugal,
Her folly ruing, lay some treacherous scheme,
My ship to wreck or to effect my fall;
My fear proved groundless, yet it was extreme.

"The Highest Will decreed, it was for Spain
I went in quest of an unsceptred world;
For her I travers'd the unfathom'd main,
In virgin kingdoms I her flag unfurl'd.
Those kingdoms, Sovereigns, I lay at your feet,
A world of treasure and a work of bliss;
I praise Almighty, Monarchs, it is meet
That Spain thank Heaven, led by Your Majesties."

Columbus rose, his countenance aglow;
The King and Queen for prayer bent the knee,
Columbus knelt, they pray'd in accents low;
The courtier knelt, next him the proud grandee,
They heard the anthem from the chapel flow,
And felt such awe, such thrills of cestasy
As only saints and prophets feel below
When visions break on them and God is near;
Te Deum was the overpowering strain
That made the audience shed Emotion's tear—
It was the great, the holiest hour of Spain.



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